

Church-state issue rises on stamp

WASHINGTON (EP)—In a surprise move last month, the U.S. Postal Service announced it will issue a commemorative post card in June honoring Catholic Bishop Frederic Baraga.

Who?

"That's what we wondered, too," said a member of the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee, which opposed the post card. But memories of the good bishop now may be assured among future historians—as the fellow who helped drag the Postal Service into an unwanted but growing dispute over the separation of church and state.

It wasn't until October 1982 that a totally religious figure, St. Francis of Assisi, graced a federal postage stamp. But then came Martin Luther a year later, and now Baraga. Opponents of religious stamp issues are hopping mad, particularly about Baraga.

Baraga's post card was pushed by Rep. Robert Davis, R-Mich., who won the backing of Postmaster General William Bolger over objections of his advisory committee. One sore point is Baraga's obscurity: It turns out he was a Slovenian priest from Yugoslavia who helped several Indian tribes around Lake Superior in the mid-1800s.

Pro football solves mystery of John 3:16

DETROIT (EP)—The mystery of the "John 3:16" banner at NFL games has finally been solved. According to Pro Football Weekly and Detroit Lions publicist Brian Muir, the "John 3:16" sign originated from the same fellow who wears the rainbow-colored wig and the "Jesus Saves" T-shirt, and manages to get his face on television at most big-time sporting events. "I met him at the Super Bowl a couple of years ago," Muir said. "He says he goes around to sports events to get people to ask questions about the sign. Then he talks to them about religion."

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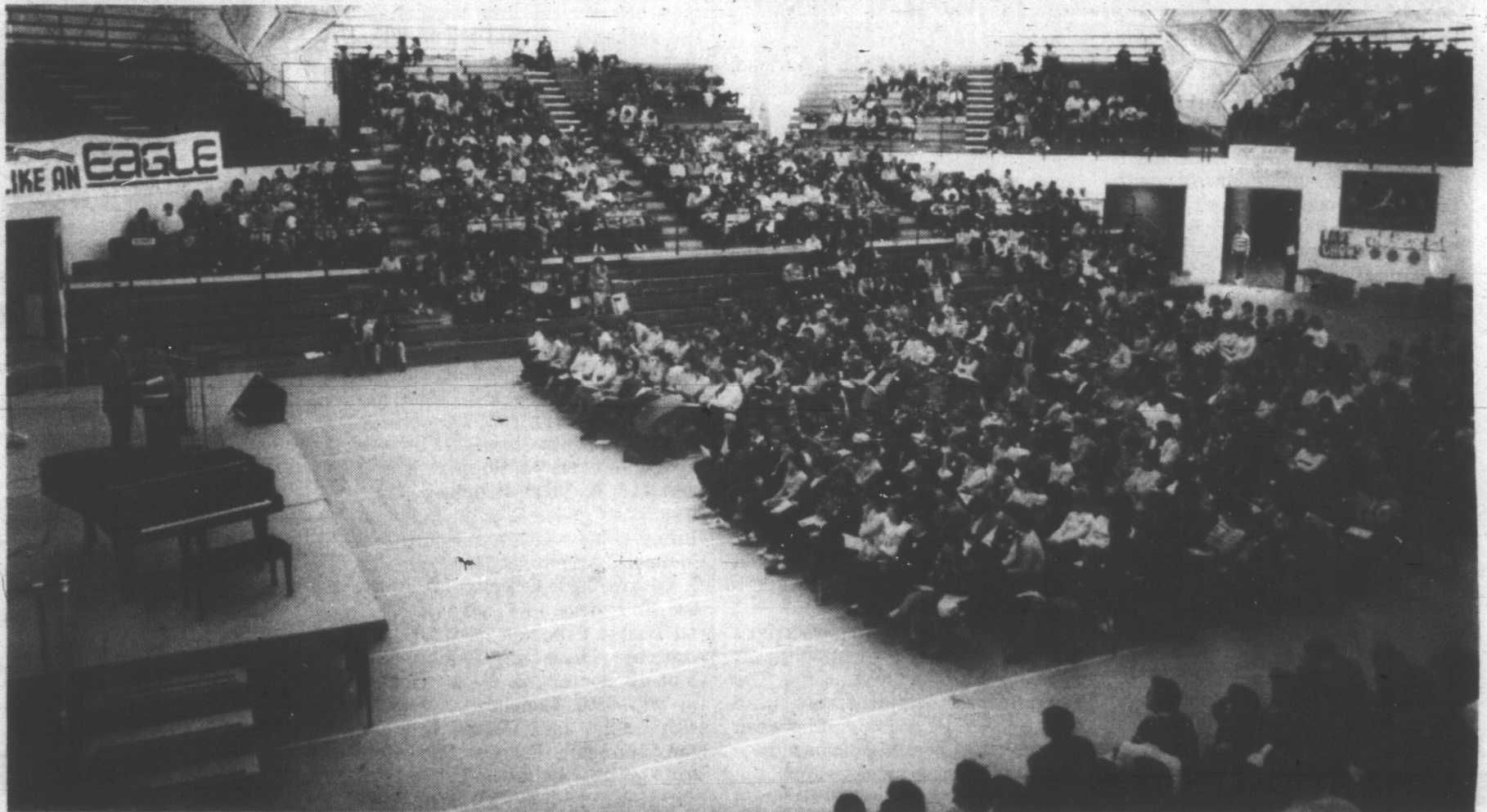
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The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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"Soar like an eagle"

More than 1,500 young people registered for the annual Youth Evangelism Conference at Mississippi College. In the picture, Peter McLeod, pastor of First Church, Hattiesburg, gives an inspirational message. Evangelism director Guy

Henderson reported 80 decisions during the December conference, including seven professions of faith. "Soar Like an Eagle," was the theme of the meeting. (Steve Colston photo.)

Widow of slain Liberian leader prays for love to forgive enemies

By David R. Wilkinson

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—More than three-and-a-half years after her husband was assassinated in a military coup, the widow of Liberian president and internationally-known Baptist leader William R. Tolbert Jr., still prays daily "for love to forgive my enemies."

Tolbert, president of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention for 22 years, and president of the Baptist World Alliance, 1965-1970, was killed in an April 1980 coup led by the head of the country's national guard.

He was shot to death in the official residence on the eve of a three-week centennial celebration of Baptist work in the country. His wife, Victoria, who heard the shots from downstairs, was arrested and imprisoned, along with other members of the family.

For more than two years, Mrs. Tolbert said, she was emotionally unable to speak of her husband's death. But in an interview in her son's apartment in Louisville, Ky., she recalled the horrible sequence of events.

The president emeritus of the Liberian Convention's Baptist Woman's Union interspersed the account with frequent references to the "love and support" of Baptists and other Christians around the world.

Her only surviving son, William R. Tolbert III, is a first-year theology student at Southern Seminary here. Tolbert, who was imprisoned for two years followed the coup, hopes someday to return

to Liberia to follow in his father's footsteps as a minister. In addition to his other responsibilities, the senior Tolbert served for 25 years as pastor of Zion Praise Baptist Church in Bensonville, his home town.

Mrs. Tolbert was extremely careful not to criticize the current administration in Liberia, since some family members still live in the country and Southern Baptist missionaries continue to minister there.

On the day her husband was killed, Mrs. Tolbert was thrust into a single jail cell shared by 26 other persons—men and women. "For days I didn't know where I was," she recalled. "I had no idea what would happen to me."

Even so, she "found a sense of inner peace. We sang and prayed together. I knew the Lord would take care of me."

She received no word from the outside and wondered if her children had received the same fate as her husband. She was unaware of the many petitions for her release, including a resolution from the Woman's Department of the Baptist World Alliance.

The jail had no windows, and it was two months before she was allowed to venture outside for brief, close-guarded walks, Mrs. Tolbert said. After three months in prison, soldiers came to get her.

Rather than facing an execution as she anticipated, she was placed under house arrest and

moved to a small house under 24-hour guard.

On the last day of 1980, Mrs. Tolbert was allowed to come to the United States for medical treatment. Four months later, however, she returned to Liberia to seek the safety of her children and other family members.

"I had promised to come back, she explained. "I wasn't going to stay here when all my children were still in Liberia."

Each of the seven children, except for elder son A.B., was eventually released. A.B., representative in the legislature, was executed in October 1981, despite numerous requests for his release, including a petition from the Queen of England.

Today, most of the family lives in the U.S. One of five daughters, a physician, chose to remain in Liberia with her family.

After Mrs. Tolbert became seriously ill again, doctors convinced government authorities another trip to the U.S. was necessary for adequate medical care. After visiting a U.S. doctor, however, the pain and tension caused by the trauma ceased. Mrs. Tolbert wasn't surprised. She has no doubts that "the Lord made me sick so I could come to the U.S."

Mrs. Tolbert said she has no long-range plans, except for spending time with her children and grandchildren. "The Lord has been good to me," she said. "I'm willing to do whatever he wants me to do."

(Wilkinson writes for Southern Seminary.)

Editorials by don mcgregor

Help in forced terminations

A news item on another page of this issue calls attention to the problem of forced termination of church staff ministers. And surely there is a problem.

Clifton Perkins, director of the department of Church-Minister Relations and Annuity for Mississippi Baptists, estimates that in Mississippi alone during the past 12 months there have been 45 forced terminations. For our state that is a lot of church staff members getting fired in a short period of time.

The Church-Minister Relations Department has a procedure for helping those ministers who are forced out of their positions. There is financial help available for ministers who find themselves in that situation. It is limited, of course; but it is real, and it is available.

The minister who has been terminated needs to contact Perkins at Box 530, Jackson, Ms 39205. The telephone number is 968-3800.

This help has been established by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and voted into the annual budget by the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Those ministers who have been terminated and who need this service should not hesitate to make that fact known. Mississippi has been one of the pioneer states in leading out in this program.

The Church-Minister Relations and Annuity Department also has pioneered in another program for ministers that is worthy of note. It is called the Ministers' Care Program and involves the mental and spiritual health of ministers and their families. The program is carried on through cost-sharing pastoral counseling for ministers and their families. The counselors have been approved by the Executive Committee of the Convention Board upon the recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the Church-Minister Relations Department.

The program is under the administration of the department. Ministers and their families are eligible for participation; and the word, minister, is used to apply to a person who is engaged in full-time work with a church or a church-related vocation on a ministerial level. It includes ministers of education, music, youth, and so forth. Family members would include the minister's wife and children.

The Convention Board pays a fixed amount of the fee for counseling. It pays \$20 per hour at this time. The remainder of whatever cost there may be is to be negotiated between the counselor and the minister.

To make this service available to himself, the minister only needs to call the office of the approved coun-

selor. The counselor will notify the director of Church-Minister Relations before counseling begins, and the sessions are limited to 12 in number unless additional sessions are approved.

The minister can be assured of confidentiality.

Here are the counselors:

Jack Follis, Baptist Center Building, 2641 24th Avenue, Meridian, MS 39301, Telephone, 483-1419; David B. Grantham, Shepherd's Staff Counseling Center, 1701 Northwest Street, Jackson, MS 39202, Telephone, 352-7308; Kenneth R. Gilburth, Shepherd's Staff Counseling Center, 1701 Northwest Street, Jackson, MS 39202, Telephone, 352-7308; Milton Webb, Mid-South Christian Counseling Center, 399 N. Holmes Street, Memphis, TN 38112, Telephone, (901) 324-8556 or (901) 452-2710; Macklyn Hubbell, New Orleans Seminary Counseling Center, 3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126-9988, Telephone, (504) 282-4455; Carroll Benton Freeman, New Orleans Seminary Counseling Center, 3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126-9988, Telephone, (504) 282-4455; Stanley Jack Watson, New Orleans Seminary Counseling Center, 3939 Gentilly Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126-9988, Telephone (504) 282-4455.



A Baptist Record guarantee

The Baptist Record has embarked upon a new era. We have become a tabloid newspaper. We have done this because we feel that it offers a more attractive format for readership and a more efficient size for

handling. We have taken this step with the reader in mind. We hope our readers enjoy it. The responses we have had so far from our two previous trial runs and from the first issue of the new year have been overwhelmingly in favor of the smaller format.

Actually, the full-size newspaper that we have been publishing was rather a late addition to the Baptist Record scene. A. L. Goodrich, who was editor until his death in 1956, initiated the full-size paper just before he died. That, of course, accounted for 28 years of our 108-year history. For the first 80 years we were less than full-size.

There is nothing wrong with the full-size format. We feel, however, that the same amount of space folded once to make twice as many pages will be easier to read. And readership is the ultimate objective in our endeavor.

Because of the fact that the only complaints on the tabloid size during the two trial runs were that the type was smaller, it needs to be noted that the type to be found on these pages is the same size as was that in the full-size newspaper. In order not to have to reset a great deal of type during the trials, we had to make up the pages and reduce them slightly. That is no longer necessary.

We liked our first issue as a regular tabloid, but we don't intend to be satisfied with what we have. As we use the format from week to week, we hope to improve on it.

We hope our readers will like it. And we hope we are able to interest new readers.

Join us in this ministry of information about missions all over the world and issues that affect Southern Baptists as well as other features that will be helpful to church members.

We solicit your interest and guarantee to make you more aware of what Southern Baptists are about.

Guest opinion . . .

The New Testament ministry—the call

By T. B. Maston

Let me share some of my personal experience. I am not an ordained minister. I felt "called to preach" when 17 years of age, a few months after my conversion. For some

reason, which I did not understand, I did not believe I was ever supposed to be the pastor of a church. I shared this feeling with my wise old Christian dad. His advice to me was, "My boy, as long as you feel that way about it, don't be ordained. We have too many ordained preachers who do not preach."

I struggled for years in my search for the will of God concerning my life. There was a gradual conviction, which would take too much space to enlarge on, that my area of ministry was teaching.

My struggle to find the will of God caused me, in later years, to examine more carefully than I would have done otherwise the concept of the call of God in the New Testament. I came to the conclusion that God's basic call was and still is a call to minister or serve. This call is or should be a call to every child of God.

But I also discovered that the New Testament revealed that some individuals are called to perform distinctive functions in and for the Christian fellowship: "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints . . ." (Eph. 4:11-12; cf. I Cor. 12:27-30). I also concluded that within the realm of these specially called ones there was not supposed to be a hierarchy of callings.

The highest call of God for any child of God is to do the will of God.

Furthermore, I had a growing conviction that God called me to preach as a 17-year-old because that was the only call I knew except missionary service; and I was certainly not ready for that. In other words, our heavenly Father adjusted himself to my limitations. Also, he was unusually kind to me to impress on me that my calling was not to the pastoral ministry. I have supplied pulpits frequently in years past, but I have never considered preaching as my main task.

My judgment is that many young people even in our more enlightened age could be saved from making mistakes concerning the will of God if they understood that his basic call is a call to minister or serve. They would then realize that preaching, teaching, music, etc. are simply means or methods whereby one serves God, the Christian fellowship, and ministers to people in general.

This might mean, which I think would be helpful, that there would not be so much talk about "a call to preach" but rather "a call to minister or serve." After all, Paul referred to himself as a "preacher" only a couple of times (I Tim. 2:15; II Tim. 1:11). In both of these places he also referred to himself as an apostle and teacher. It is true that he rather fre-

quently mentioned his proclamation or preaching the gospel (I Cor. 2:4; 15:14; II Tim. 4:17; Titus 1:3). In three of his epistles he introduced himself as a servant or slave (RSV) of Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1; cf. I Cor. 9:19; Gal. 1:10).

The preceding, along with the fact that an increasing number of young people, including young women, are feeling the call of God to various types of ministry, may mean that we should restudy the nature of the call of God and re-examine the generally accepted idea of the call. We may decide that the prevailing concept of the call and its resulting ministry differs in some important respect from what is found in the New Testament.

At least we should have the curiosity and the courage to study this matter with searching minds and a willingness to change if we are persuaded that we and our churches have been wrong. May our heavenly Father through the Spirit give us the wisdom that we need.

T. B. Maston is a retired professor of ethics at Southwestern Seminary.

Profanity is a vice so mean and low that every man of sense and character detests and despises it.—George Washington

I never knew a man who was good at making excuses who was good at anything else.—Benjamin Franklin

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Planned Growth in Giving is "call for commitment"

By Tim Nicholas

The national director of a plan to encourage significant increases in church giving told staffers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board last week that the basic aim of the 15 year campaign "is a massive convention-wide call for commitment to Bold Mission Thrust."

Cecil Ray, formerly executive secretary for North Carolina Baptists, began his work as director of the Planned Growth in Giving campaign on January 1. The campaign was voted into existence at the 1983 Southern Baptist Convention, with state affirmation by messengers to the 1983 Mississippi Baptist Convention. Ray is visiting state convention offices to explain his work.

"Planned Growth in Giving is an effort to raise the giving level of individuals," explained a handout given staffers.

"Such growth is vital to spiritual development. Planned Growth in Giving will help church members fulfill their potential and become more involved in fulfilling Bold Mission Thrust objectives. This fifteen-year growth plan challenges each Baptist, each family unit, each church, and each state convention to respond with a percentage increase in giving each year," the handout said.

Planned Growth in Giving, said Ray, does not replace Bold Mission Thrust, Southern Baptists' efforts to make the gospel message available to everyone on earth by the year 2000. Ray said the campaign is "less a program than a movement" that ultimately would move Cooperative Program shares of gifts to home and foreign missions to 75 percent of the total.

Total gifts to Southern Baptist churches today, estimated Ray, are at \$3 billion. He said the campaign would attempt to grow that total to \$20 billion, by the end of the century, a seven-fold increase.

At the same time, if it is successful gifts to the Cooperative Program would move from approximately \$300 million to about \$2½ billion by the year 2000.

"This is enough to frighten the most stalwart," said Ray, noting that such a campaign "is not Baptists doing business as usual."

At the same meeting with MBCB staffers, were 15 volunteers from across Mississippi who will take national training in order to lead local groups in increasing giving. This task force will make information available to churches and associations on ways to encourage giving increases.

Julius Thompson, consultant in the MBCB's Stewardship and Cooperative Program Promotion Department, is state Planned Growth in Giving director.

Task force members include James Yates, pastor, First Church, Yazoo City, chairman; Charles Pickering, layman and state convention president from First Church, Laurel; Ingram Foster, Jr., layman, First Church Prentiss;

Bobby Perry, director of missions, Gulf Coast Association; J. W. Brister, director of missions, Hinds-Madison Association; Alan Day, pastor, First Church, McComb; Leon Young, director of missions, Lauderdale Association;

Ray Lloyd, pastor, First Church,

Starkville; Charles Nestor, pastor, First Church, Bruce; Larry Fields, pastor, Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; Earl Craig Jr., pastor, First Church, Jackson;

Harry Lucenay, pastor, Temple Church, Hattiesburg; Jimmy McGee, pastor, First Church, Grenada; Gordon Sansing, pastor, First Church, Vicksburg; and Tommy Tutor, pastor, Oakhurst Church, Clarksdale.

A simultaneous associational pastors' conference is being asked for by Ray on Nov. 5, 1984 to kick off a lead-



Cecil Ray, left, is national director of the Planned Growth in Giving campaign. James Yates, right, is chairman of the state task force.

ership emphasis for Planned Growth in Giving.

Ray noted that giving by Southern Baptists over the past 30 years has hovered at two to two-and-one-half percent of total income. He said the campaign would seek to raise that level to four percent.

Bi-vocational ministers hold national meeting in Jackson

The National Council for Bi-vocational Ministries was organized Dec. 15 and 16 in Jackson during a meeting that attracted participants from Oregon to Florida. There were 20 persons present for the meeting that was sponsored by the Home Mission Board. It was held at the Sheraton Regency Hotel in Jackson.

Dale Holloway, Rankin County pastor and national consultant for bi-vocational ministries for the Home Mission Board, was in charge of the meeting. Holloway is pastor of Day Star Baptist Church.

Ralph Halbrooks, director of the association missions department for the Alabama Baptist Convention,

was elected president. The vice-president is John Saunders, Florida Baptist Convention. James Nelson, director of missions for the Marshall Association in Alabama, is one director. Don Evans, Missouri Baptist Convention, is the other.

The council agreed to meet annually; and the next meeting will be Dec. 6 and 7, 1984, in Jackson.

Major speakers were Nelson and Jerry Smith, a bi-vocational pastor in Red River, N. M. Smith is part owner and manager of a ski lodge in Red River. Nelson is a former director of association missions for the Home Mission Board. He spoke on the development of emphasis on bi-

vocational ministries in the Southern Baptist Convention. Smith cited models of bi-vocational ministry and told of his pilgrimage as a bi-vocational pastor and of opportunities for ministry "in the market place."

The group considered 34 priorities of bi-vocational ministry and majored on the three highest. They were (1) enhancing the self image of the 10,000 bi-vocational pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention, (2) alerting Christian ministry students to choose and nurture a second vocation as an enabler or means for ministry, and (3) providing for multi-staff churches through use of bi-vocational ministries.

The council adopted five projects for implementation. They are (1) develop a handbook for bi-vocational ministers, (2) compile and edit materials for a book to be titled, "Models of Bi-Vocational Ministry," (3) compile and edit materials for a pamphlet to be titled, "Experiences of Ministry in the Market Place," (4) develop a syllabus for a course on bi-vocational ministries, and (5) a recommendation for a workable, nationwide plan for placement of bi-vocational ministries.

Hollis Bryant, consultant in the Cooperative Missions Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, pointed out that five conferences for bi-vocational ministers in Mississippi had been held during 1983 and that five are planned for 1984.

The group previewed a video tape being produced in Jackson and funded by the Home Mission Board titled "Whatever It Takes." Holloway; Ken Cook, bi-vocational pastor of Burch Hill Church, Jackson; and Ian Richardson, independent film maker, are scripting and filming the video tape that will be available nationwide, Holloway said.



Officers of the newly formed National Council for Bi-vocational Ministries are, left to right, John Saunders, Florida, vice-president; James Nelson, Alabama; director; Ralph Halbrooks, Alabama, president; and Dale Holloway, Mississippi, national consultant. Don Evans, director, not pictured.

Wolfe to speak to religious educators

An emphasis on personal spiritual growth will be a feature of the annual Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association meeting, Feb. 16-18 at Biloxi. This emphasis will be led by Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, and former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

The meeting begins with registration at 1 p.m., Feb. 16 at Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge in Biloxi and concludes Friday evening with a complimentary seafood banquet at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly. Saturday is free time.

Motivation will be the topic of a talk entitled "Paint Your Rainbow" to be led by Bill Hinson, pastor of First Church, New Orleans and special assistant to the president of Success Motivation Institute, Inc., Waco, Tex.

David and Ashley Worthington of Trinity Heights Church, Shreveport, will lead inspirational music. David is former minister of music at Jackson's Ridgecrest Church.

Other featured speakers include Mark Short of New Orleans Seminary and John Chandler, supervisor of the Church Staff Section of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Short will speak on "Delegating Responsibility," and Chandler will discuss "Communication Skills" and "Building a Team Spirit."

Farrell Blankenship of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will discuss broadcast services in Southern Baptist life, Rick Caldwell of Geyer Springs Church, Little Rock, will discuss youth ministry; and Janet Kemp, preschool coordinator for New Orleans Seminary, will speak on children's and preschool work.

Rhonda Kelly of Oschner's Clinic in New Orleans, will speak to the staff wives on "Getting Your Act Together," discussing career plans, coping, and self esteem. A series of staff wives activities is planned.

John Marshall, minister of education at First Church, Laurel, and president of Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association, said the association is aiming at a total membership of 125 in the state. To register to attend the meeting and to arrange for preschool care, write Marshall at Box 2636, Laurel, Miss., 39442. Preschool care requests need to be in by Jan. 15, Marshall said.

Fire damages FBC, Summit

Extensive water and smoke damage was done to the auditorium and education building of First Church, Summit, Dec. 26 in a fire that began in the maintenance room and then spread to the other buildings. Pastor Dennis Johnsey said the damage amounted to about \$200,000, which was well covered by insurance.

Worship services are being held in the Christian Life Center while rebuilding is going on. Johnsey said it was expected to take about 12 weeks.

Evangelism/Bible Conference

First Baptist Church, Gulfport

Feb. 6-8

Theme: "Mississippi's Great Challenge: Church Growth"

Monday Evening Session

Presiding—Guy Henderson

- 6:30 "I will proclaim your greatness my God and King" Psalm 145:1
Mini-Concert Churchmen Quartet of Petal
- 6:50 Keyboard Praise
- 7:00 Prayer
Vocal Witness David Oliver
Congregational Praise Dan C. Hall, Leading
Welcome Guy Henderson
- 7:20 Bible Study "The Meaning of Discipleship" Ron Dunn
- 7:50 Mississippi's Evangelism Strategy Guy Henderson
- 8:00 Theme Interpretation Guy Henderson
- 8:10 "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised" Psalm 48:1
Congregational Singing Dan C. Hall, Leading
Choral Message Carpenters' Wood
Congregational Singing Dan C. Hall, Leading
Vocal Witness Bill & Marian Lee
- 8:30 Message "A Vision of Church Growth" Harold Branch
- 9:15 A Closing Vocal Message Tracy Simmons
- You Are Invited to A Reception.
Sponsored by
Mississippi's Preaching and Music Evangelists
9:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

Tuesday Morning Session

Presiding—Keith Wilkinson

- 8:30 "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people" Psalm 117:1
Praise From the Keyboard
- 8:55 Vocal Witness "Ship Ahoy" C. H. "Pop" Stone, Sr.
Prayer
Congregational Praise Kathryn Barfield, Leading
- 9:15 Bible Study "The Meaning of Church Growth" Ron Dunn
- 9:45 Break for Conference
- 10:00 Conferences
- 10:50 Break for General Session
- 11:00 Congregational Singing Kathryn Barfield, Leading
- 11:05 CWT Testimony
- 11:15 Vocal Witness R. L. & Beth Sigrest
- 11:20 MESSAGE "Barriers to Church Growth" Jay Strack
- Tuesday Afternoon Session
Presiding—Guy Henderson
- 1:20 "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised" Psalm 48:1
Praise from the Keyboards
- Congregational Singing Leon Bedsole, Leading
Vocal Witness Hubert Greer
- 1:45 BIBLE STUDY "Spiritual Gifts & Church Growth" Ron Dunn
Joel 2:28-32, Eph. 4:7-14
- 2:15 Break for Conferences
- 2:30 CONFERENCES
- 3:30 Break for General Sessions
- 3:40 Congregational Singing Leon Bedsole, Leading
Vocal Message Myrna Loy Hedgepeth
- 3:50 MESSAGE "Christ, Our Model of Growth" Harold Branch
Luke 2:52
- 4:20 Adjourn

Tuesday Evening Session

Presiding—Keith Wilkinson

- 6:30 "Praise the Lord, O My Soul" Psalm 103:2
Mississippi Churchmen Handbells
- 6:50 Vocal Witness Nina Shaw & Richard Cain
Congregational Singing Marilyn Smith, Leading
- 7:00 BIBLE STUDY "Multiplications of Disciples & Churches" Delos Miles
Isaiah 54:1-3, Acts 6:7, 9:31
- 7:30 Congregational Singing Marilyn Smith, Leading
Vocal Witness (Ladies Trio) Sounds of Joy
- 7:45 Testimonies: Revival Preparation James Fancher
Spiritual Awakening Ed Gandy
- 8:15 Congregational Singing from "Glory Songs" Arnold Bridges
Choral Message Mississippi Singing Churchmen
Vocal Message Clint Nichols
- 8:30 MESSAGE "The Urgency of Church Growth" Jay Strack
A Closing Vocal Message Susie Fulton

Wednesday Morning Session

Presiding—Guy Henderson

- 8:45 "I will proclaim your greatness my God and King" Psalm 145:1
Praise from the Keyboards
- Vocal Witness Lewis Oswalt
Congregational Singing Charles Red, Leading
- 9:00 BIBLE STUDY "Why the Immaturity and Incompleteness" Delos Miles
Psalm 118:22-25, Ephesians 4:11-16

- 9:40 Congregational Singing Charles Red, Leading
- 9:50 Mini Concert by Music Evangelists
Jerry Swimmer
Ronnie Cottingham
Ann Colbert
Tom Larrimore
Tommy & Diane Winders

10:40 MESSAGE "Church Growth and World Missions" R. Keith Parks
Matthew 28:18-20

- 11:10 Prayer Period
11:25 Vocal Benediction Bobby Shurden

Motel listing

You must tell the motel that you are planning to attend the **Evangelism/Bible Conference** sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board when making your reservation and upon checking into the motel! (Prices subject to change).

Best Western Gulfport Inn

2922 West Beach Blvd., (P.O. Box 4072), Gulfport, MS 39501, 1-800-528-1234 or (601) 864-4650. Single-\$27, Double-\$32 per day.

Biloxi Beach Motor Inn

4650 West Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS 39531, 388-3310. \$30 per room, whether one or four people.

Broadwater Beach Hotel

West Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS 39531, 388-2211 or 1-800-647-3964 (outside Mississippi). \$55 starting rate to \$75 per day.

Emerald Beach Quality Inn

3251 West Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS 39531, 388-3212. Single-\$35/\$40, Double-\$48/\$58.

Fairchild's Motel

826 East Beach Blvd., Gulfport, MS 39501, 896-7515, Single-\$21.90 for one, \$24.90 two; Double-\$31.90. Kitchenettes, small \$30, large \$45.

Fountainhead

3314 West Beach, Gulfport, MS 39501, 864-1381, Single-\$21, Double-\$23, Triple-\$26, Quad-\$29.

Holiday Inn—Biloxi

3890 West Beach Blvd., Biloxi, MS 39531, 388-3551 or 1-800-238-8000. Single-\$36, Double-\$46.

Holiday Inn—Gulfport—Airport

Route 9, Highway 49 North, Gulfport, MS 39503, 868-8200. Single-\$36, Double-\$46.

Holiday Inn—Gulfport

Highway 90 and Pratt Avenue, Gulfport, MS 39501, 864-4310 or 1-800-238-8000. Single \$36, Double \$46.

Howard Johnsons

3920 West Beach Blvd., Biloxi 39531, 388-6310 or 1-800-654-2000. Single-\$34, Double-\$39.

Ramada Inn

3719 West Beach Blvd., Biloxi 39531, 388-5512, \$25 per room whether 1 or 4.

Ramada Inn

220 West Beach Blvd., Long Beach, MS 39560, 864-8811 or 1-800-228-2828. \$32 per room whether 1 or 4.

Sahara Motel

530 Beach Blvd., Gulfport, MS 39501, 896-7211. Single-\$22, Double-\$24.50, Triple-\$29.50, Quad-\$31.50.

Sheraton-Gulfport Inn

Highway 49 & I-10, Gulfport, MS 39503, 864-0050 or 1-800-325-3535. Single-\$29, Double \$34.

Also, rooms are available at **Gulfshore Baptist Assembly** for \$14.75 per person (2 to a room). Make reservations by calling Frank Simmons, 452-7261.

Cooperative Program gifts for 1983 reach basic budget

Mississippi Baptists made their basic 1983 budget, narrowly missing their total budget by .8 percent, according to an announcement by Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The basic budget of \$14,571,000 was passed with a total of \$14,943,320 given to the Cooperative Program. The total budget was \$15,071,000.

The final month of 1983 brought in \$1,177,886, making 1983 a year with 11 of 12 months with incomes of more than a million dollars. Only May showed less than a million with \$961,739.

The total budget shortfall was only \$127,680. This means that the ad-

vance section, which includes approximately a quarter million dollars each to Christian education and to the SBC Cooperative Program, will only receive proportionate amounts of the gifts over \$14,071,000. The Children's Village and Baptist Medical Center hardship assistance were included in the advance section also at \$4,034 and \$2,571, respectively.

December 1982 giving was slightly higher than giving in December of 1983. December of 1982 totaled \$1,211,067, a total of \$33,181 more than giving in December 1983.

Total giving in 1983 was a 9.3 percent increase over than of 1982, the increasing being \$1,266,664.

Thais accept Christ

PATTAYA, Thailand—Thirty-four boys and girls stepped forward almost as a body during the invitation at the closing service of a camp for pre-teens conducted by the Thailand Baptist Mission. After careful counseling, leaders confirmed the decisions and the youngsters wrote their statements of faith. One-day retreats are planned for early in 1984 to teach them the responsibilities of Christianity. Thirty-nine children from 11 churches participated in their camp.

Missionaries safe after Nigeria coup

Missionaries in Nigeria were said to be fine following a Dec. 30 coup, according to Fred Levrets, executive director of the Baptist Mission in the African nation, where approximately 100 Southern Baptists are serving.

A dusk-to-dawn curfew had already been lifted; and business was returning to normal, according to Foreign Mission Board personnel. Maj. Gen. Mohammad Buhari led the coup, which toppled President Shugu Shagari and the civilian government.

A volunteer group composed mainly of Samford University students and faculty members has since traveled to Nigeria to participate in a three-week mission visit.



The author of best-seller *The Key to Triumphant Living* now brings you — **THE HALLELUJAH FACTOR**.

An adventure in PRAISE, the forgotten element so vital today in reaching people for Christ. A challenging and practical work containing:

- twenty praise studies
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- index of prominent Bible passages

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\$7.95

Jack R. Taylor, preacher, teacher, and author, is president of Dimensions in Christian Living, Fort Worth, Texas.



At your Baptist Book Store
BROADMAN

Faces And Places

by anne washburn mc williams

That was 1983

Every once in a while I bump into a gloomy friend who tells me all about his ills and financial woes and impossible tasks. Or launches into the awful state the world has come to and what a mess Washington is in, etcetera, etcetera. Any hopeful suggestion I make, he discards like a hot potato. In short, "This was a very bad year." Reminds me of the story a Scotsman, J. D. Douglas, told of his pessimistic friend: "One glorious evening in June (the longest day), I met the man and drew his attention to the summer sun glowing over land and sea and expressed the hope that the wonder of it all was not lost on him. 'Aye,' he said, 'but just remember that tomorrow we'll be on the way back toward winter.'"

The only real complaint I had about 1983 was that it got away too fast. It must have had four seasons—years generally do—but they all blended into an orange streak.

On May 20, 1983, I felt a whole lot older when I realized I had been working on one job for 30 years. And it didn't help that feeling when on July 19 I spoke to the East Liberty association's WMU in Alabama and realized that it had been 37 years since I'd made a speech there in LaFayette, at the time of my high school graduation!

Our church in Clinton prepared for a February revival, and the evangelist got deathly sick.

The year ended on a cold note. Christmas Day at Mama's was zero degrees, and if we took a bath it had to be in ice, because all the water was frozen.

We planned for a sunny October vacation, and spent it in rain and fog.

My birthday on March 22 was probably the most frustrating day of the whole year, even though I spent it at the state WMU convention (ordinarily my favorite meeting) and at First Baptist Church, Vicksburg—a warm and hospitable church in a charming city, where some most kind ladies said they like to read this column. But when I had arrived the night before, the parking lot at the motel was full. I squeezed into a corner spot, among tour buses and cars. Then someone parked behind me and later (briefly) I entertained the thought of knocking off a fender in order to get out. The night was cold. I made three trips up an outside stairway to deliver books, coat, notebooks, suitcase, typewriter, and camera to my room. Then after the night session I sat up until 1 p.m. trying to cut an hour's worth of speech material to five minutes. (Pattie Dent, Donna Durr, and I had five minutes each to tell about a two-weeks mission trip to Argentina.) On the 22nd, from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., I listened to speeches (no coffee breaks), delivered my five-minute message (except I think I ran over to nine minutes and took up Pattie's time), snapped pictures between bites of lunch.

That morning I left my notes spread in a certain order, all ready to type an article that afternoon for the Vicksburg Evening Post. In late afternoon I found my motel room

empty! "We've got another group coming," the desk attendant answered my alarmed question. "We've moved you to another room." All my notes were shuffled. But I typed the article, walked to the newspaper office and back, too late for a proper supper—only a fast snack, and then to the church to take a picture at a prearranged time. About 8, before the last speech, I decided to leave, go home and enjoy my birthday. I took my belongings down the motel stairs, in three trips again, and drove to Clinton. It was 10 o'clock, and W.D. had gone to bed. But he had left a note propped on the couch by a gift package of satin sheets. By then I was ready for some luxurious sleep.

Do I begin to sound like my gloomy friend? I wouldn't want to leave that impression. Actually, for me 1983 was a good year. At the Natchez Eola, I ate crawfish for the first time. (Where have they been all my life?) At our church, the pastor took over in the evangelist's place, and the revival went on. At Christmas, I got a warm note from the Friday Girls' Bible study group at Shelby. And in Alabama, we enjoyed the warmth of family get-togethers. 1983 took me to Vail, Colo., and Ridgecrest, N.C., without any wrecks. I flew to Washington, D.C. and the plane didn't crash. W.D. and I camped at Choctaw Lake in Mississippi and didn't get eaten by the alligators. County Line, the church where I grew up, was placed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks (not because of my age, but because of the age of the building and its contents.) At long last, during that rainy vacation week, I got to visit the WMU headquarters building in Birmingham.

I got the news that my book, *When Faith Triumphs*, is selling well in Spanish. And the subject of the book, David Gomes, wrote in December that a powerful radio station, the Copacabana, will be broadcasting 24 hours a day from the Building of Faith (the story of that building is a central part of his story.) Haydee, David's wife, was asked to review the book at the Chilean Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

In 1983, W.D. retired, so our lifestyle changed—to our satisfaction, for it gives us more time together. The best surprise I got—in 1983 or any year—was the 30th anniversary party the Baptist Record staff gave me in May:

I interviewed a man who last month received an award given previously to Einstein and Schweitzer. As Cornel Petrashevich told me of religious persecution in Rumania, I was reminded of the treasure I have: I am free to speak and worship and write, where and when and however I choose. I needed his reminder that that isn't true everywhere in the world.

Now already 1984 is two weeks old. Two things I resolve.

(1) If I get in a rut, not to stay there. As Jamie Buckingham wrote, "Everyone knows a rut is nothing but

a grave with both ends knocked out."

(2) Schedule more Stop Days. Long ago, when I was at Judson College, President John Ingle Riddle would every once in a while—when everybody was tired out with studies and activities and tests—get up in the dining hall and declare, "Tomorrow will be Stop Day." On Stop Day, nobody was to study or go to classes or meetings—just have fun, or rest all day. I can still see the wide grin under Dr. Riddle's shock of white hair, and his face all covered with red lip prints (girls rushed up to cover him with kisses every time he made that announcement!)

On some Stop Days I will go fishing with W.D. Last summer he and two of his sisters, Minnie and Etta, caught more than 80, two days straight, at Wolfe Lake. (Minnie declared she caught two on one pole at the same time.)

In 1983, MasterLife opened for me new vistas of what it means to be an obedient servant. One of its best lessons was at regular intervals to take time for a half day, or day, of solitude and prayer. I resolve to do that more often, so I can talk with the Lord about correlating my plans with his plans.

Pastor's widow dies of cancer

Funeral services for Ardue M. Cooper, widow of Percy M. Cooper, were held Jan. 5 at Springfield Church, Scott County. Mrs. Cooper died at home Jan. 3, ending a four-year battle with cancer during which, one said of her, "her faith never questioned and she sought every opportunity to witness."

Dewie Williams, supervisor chaplain at the Commins Unit of the Arkansas Penitentiary, brought the message with Bob Reno, minister of education at South Louisville Church, presenting the music. Proverbs 31:10-31 was read and commented on by Bobby Waggoner, pastor of Trinity Church, Carthage.

Mrs. Cooper is survived by a daughter, Mary Ann Cooper of Carthage; a sister, Gladys Holt of Purvis; and a brother, Wilbur Myrick of Forest.

Goal set for giving

MINDANAO, Philippines—Key Baptist leaders from the Mindanao Baptist convention recently agreed to promote a 50 percent increase in giving among their churches by 1985. The 161 leaders also received training in new stewardship materials. They will teach others in their associations how to use these same materials in their churches. The conference was conducted by the convention's strategy committee and the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in the Philippines.

Faith is the soul riding at anchor.—Henry W. Shaw

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record.

Women in the church

Editor:

If we could all just read and obey God's instruction, we would be a much happier, more peaceful people, to say nothing of the blessings God would pour out on us.

I really had a problem understanding or accepting God's word concerning women and their behavior in the church; but just as Mrs. McKinster and Mr. Turner stated, the Bible is very plain about a woman's place.

To say that because we are saints of God, we no longer have instructions as man and woman is to say a child does not have to obey his parents if he's a child of God; we no longer have to obey the government—no one is in authority over anyone else. For us to live with this attitude would be total chaos—no rules for anyone.

May God have mercy on us.

Rosa Horn
Raleigh, MS

Editor:

By denying women as deacons, ministers, etc., what you are in fact, doing is telling God that he is limited to only half of his human population. It is not man's place to limit God. God chooses whoever he wants; his decisions are not based on sex, height, hair color, or other such trivial things. Rather, God's choices are based on more important factors such as belief, faith, commitment, the quality of person in question, etc. When God calls a person to serve in a particular way, then it is not man's place to refuse to accept that person. By doing so you have committed a sin against God in that you have refused to allow his plan to be put into action.

If you have doubts about an individual, pray. Ask whether the person is self-appointed or God-appointed. If he/she is chosen by God, but you don't like him/her because of race, sex, age, or other relatively insignificant factors, then pray for forgiveness for thinking poorly of someone whom God commanded. Also, ask that your prejudices be removed and that you will be able to accept God's decisions through faith and trust in him.

Christian support is quite helpful and important. We pray that Christians will help, rather than hinder, each other. As Christians, our strength is in prayer—not prayer that this person or that person will change to suit us but prayer that we will listen to and obey God. For example, rather than pray that the churches that ordain women will change, let us pray that all our ministers will be both chosen and taught by Jehovah—regardless of who they may be. Remember, "... If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand" (Mark 3:25 KJV). If we fight among ourselves, then we have made Satan's task an easy one. When Christians fight, the accuser

laughs in anticipation of victory.

The main point we are trying to make is that the question of whether women should be ordained is far less important than the fact that we Christians are fighting among ourselves. Recall the instructions in 2 Timothy 3:23.

Judy Wood
Robert H. Woodmen
Hattiesburg

Editor:

So much talk about women deacons!

Until 11 years ago I belonged to a Baptist church in Argentina, South America, an outgrowth of Southern Baptist foreign missions. We had women deacons all along; and I was so used to it, it was a shock to find, when I moved to the U.S., that it is a controversial issue.

In our church (First Baptist, Rosario, Argentina) each deacon and deaconess is "in charge" of several families. My family was blessed through the years by the ministry of "our" deaconess, Dona Rosa Guillen, who constantly inspired us with her consecration and love for our Lord and for us. She visited us often. She prayed with us when our children and other members of our family were sick and was like a sister to us in time of bereavement. She is a wise Christian; and from her God-given wisdom, we have profited.

And yes, sometimes she was called upon to serve the Lord's supper. The warm look in her eyes and the friendly smile we received along with the bread and the cup made the words "fellowship" and "in remembrance of me" more meaningful.

And here in the States? Ordained or not, many women are deacons in the scriptural sense of the word. I thank God for Christian women who are model servants to other women, to children, and, yes, to men also, in our Southern Baptist churches.

As Mississippi Baptists work in partnership with Rio de la Plata Baptists, hopefully some will gain new insights on how God actually uses women to care for his flock.

Josie Smith
El Paso, Texas

Drug-alcohol testimonies

The Home of Grace alcohol/drug witness team is offering its services to the public. The Home of Grace is a Christian home for the rehabilitation of alcoholics and drug abusers.

I am counselor at the Home of Grace and am the coordinator for the team composed of men and women who give their own personal testimony concerning their ordeal with alcohol and drugs.

The team has spoken at churches and schools, both public and private, as well as to civic clubs. The goal is to touch the hearts and minds of young people and challenge them to say "no" when offered alcohol or drugs.

The team will appear at its own expense. Persons or groups interested in their services should contact me at 826-5283.

Kenneth L. W. Meeks
Home of Grace
14200 Jercho Road
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

In Xian, China

Starkville couple find church

By Marvin and Jean Bond

PART I

INTRODUCTION

We were typical tourists feasting on Peking duck, climbing the Great Wall, and admiring garden after garden. More important, we were Christian tourists keenly aware of our silent witness; and we were Baptist tourists in search of churches, pastors, and Christians.

Our visit to China was a dream come true. China, Southern Baptists' oldest missions field, had closed her doors in 1949. The doors did not open for 30 years. On many occasions we had driven through the New Territories of Hong Kong and from a hill-top had looked across the border into China. Beyond that point no American could go.

For over 100 years our missionaries had worked in that vast land. Even after the communists gained control of the country, many dared hope that they could remain to serve.

Instead, the government forced the departure of all missionaries. By 1951, the last Southern Baptist missionary had left mainland China. Waves of refugees, streaming to Hong Kong, gave reports of what took place after the exit of the missionaries.

According to the constitution, all religious practices became illegal. The government took over Christian schools, hospitals, and other institutions. Likewise, church buildings became government property; and public worship was not permitted. Had the Lord's work been in vain? Would the government wipe out Christianity in China?

On the contrary, Chinese Christians found a way. They went underground, so to speak, meeting in homes (called house churches). Their concern was not for personal safety but for fellowship and nurture. Over the next three decades the people lived without religious freedom.

Then, more than 30 years later, China approved a constitution which states:

No state organ, public organization, or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion.

The exciting news is that in 1979 a church reopened. Then another and another so that today many churches are open for worship. No longer defined by denomination, the churches have opened as Protestant churches or as Catholic churches. It is of interest to us, however, to note that several former Baptist pastors are among those selected to be pastors of the present churches.

Freedom as we know it? No, but a degree of freedom has come to the People's Republic of China. Since government watchers stand in front of the churches during services, it takes a special kind of courage for a person to attend church and to be identified by the government as a believer.

Changes in China also affected the United States, as our country and China re-established relations. Not only can Americans visit that country, but some even live and work there. Of course, American missionaries are not permitted to be among that number who live in the People's Republic of China.

In May 1983, our hopes and plans for touring China became a reality. It was our desire to visit churches, to meet pastors, and to locate former Baptist property in each of the eight cities included in our tour. In six of the eight cities we did just that.

Although we carried several names, addresses, and telephone numbers, we determined to use caution in our inquiries about persons and places. And even though we longed to worship at one of the house churches, we would make no attempt to locate one lest we create problems for our Chinese brothers and sisters. (House churches continue without government approval.)

Our tour began in Beijing (Peking). Two Chinese women met our plane, one to be our national guide and the other our guide for Beijing. The national guide accompanied us from Beijing to Xian, Nanjing, Wuxi, Suzhou, Shanghai, Guilin, and Guangzhou (Canton).

Xian

From Beijing we flew to Xian, the largest city in northwest China. Known in former days as Chang An, Xian has barely been touched by modern life. Both in atmosphere and in appearance, the city is ancient.

In what could be called a blessed encounter, we found the church in Xian. Our small map, drawn by a former China missionary, lacked in proportion and accuracy; nevertheless, it guided us to the vicinity of the church. Our Xian guide was an efficient, overly-serious young man who assured us, "I have lived in this city for 10 years and have never heard of a church." Moreover, he showed no interest in assisting us.

Our persistency paid off, however. Every city has at least one Friendship Store for the convenience of foreign shoppers. The church, according to our map, was nearby. "Please take us to the Friendship Store," we requested.

As the bus stopped in front of the store, we not only asked permission to look for the church, we also asked our guide to accompany us. Reluctantly, he agreed but followed afar off—it was as if he had determined that our search would be unsuccessful. Up and down the sidewalk we raced, peering down each passageway.

Suddenly there was the gate to the church. Chinese characters on columns indicated a Christian church, and we could see the building beyond the wall. Beckoning to our guide, we asked him to translate the characters. He did, without comment and without emotion.

"May we go inside?" we implored. Still without saying a word to us, he knocked. Then he pushed against the gate; it opened, and he entered. Quickly, we followed right behind

him. Two old men sat in the small gatehouse to our left. The guide engaged the first man in conversation, then turned to us with color mounting in his cheeks to announce, "There are no services today, and the pastors are away attending a meeting." "We know that there are no services," we answered, "but could we see inside the church?" Already, the second of the two men held in his hands a bundle of keys.

What a wonderful experience awaited us. The two kind gentlemen answered our questions. Yes, the wooden boxes, one at the front and one at the back of the church, were for the members' contributions. Yes, we could put money in the box. And the attendance? Every Sunday more than 1,200 attend the services, and many more would if the space permitted. There are three services on Sunday mornings and one on Sunday evenings.

Because God's love showed in the eyes of the men, and because we felt a kinship, our next question was unnecessary: "Are you members of this congregation?" Oh, yes, and they reported a large number of baptisms in the spring and a good spirit in the church.

There we stood in that old church which measures about 40 by 60 feet. Water puddled on the floor, for rain had poured during the day. The furnishings are meager—pews constructed of two boards, one for the back and one for the seat, a pulpit stand, a cross on the wall behind the pulpit, and the offering boxes. However, the church was neat and inviting, as if it had been cleaned with loving hands.

As we assured the two men of the prayers of Christians in America, we could no longer hold back our tears. That church has very little in the way of facilities, while some American churches even budget selfishly. But we also shed tears of thanksgiving—that there had been a time of planting by the missionaries and that many Xian Christians are examples of faithfulness.

Our new friends followed us to the street and stood in the gateway as we headed back to the Friendship Store. On Sunday morning enroute to the airport, our bus driver turned a corner near the church property. A glimpse of the street in front of the church confirmed what we had heard. The church filled even the street in front of the gate. Once again our hearts rejoiced knowing that God's grace is sufficient, and that those who rely upon him will persevere.

Marvin and Jean Bond, former Southern Baptist missionaries to Hong Kong, served as hosts for a group of Southern Baptists who toured China in May 1983. This is the first in a series of five articles describing the trip. Marvin and Jean Bond may be written at 208 South Washington, Starkville, MS 39759.

Seal invited to Prayer Breakfast in Washington

W. Otis Seal, pastor of Calvary Church, Meridian, and his wife, Jacqueline, have been invited to attend the President's Prayer Breakfast to be held Feb. 2, at 8 a.m. in Washington, D.C., in the International Ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel.

They plan to leave Meridian Jan. 30 and drive to Washington to attend the breakfast. The church is paying their travel expenses.

Deadline policy

The Baptist Record goes to press on Tuesday mornings for mailing on Wednesdays. This means that material for stories in the paper must reach the Baptist Record offices by noon on the previous Friday.

With most mail in Mississippi taking two days to travel, the stories need to be mailed on Wednesdays for possible inclusion in the following week's paper.

Dated material receives priority handling. A death over the weekend would be the type of exception the Baptist Record would consider handling on a Monday for that week's issue. Revivals starting that week are not. The Record will use revival notices mailed late as "in progress."

Nursing school accredited still

William Carey College has received word from the New York offices of the National League for Nursing that its school of nursing has been granted continuing accreditation for eight years for the baccalaureate program. This constitutes the maximum number of years awarded

schools of nursing by the National League.

While nursing classes are taught on William Carey's Hattiesburg and Gulfport campuses, the clinical phase is largely centered at Southern Baptist Hospital, New Orleans.



Wayside Chapel

Glen Williams and Herbert Hoff stand before the Wayside Chapel which was built by Christian laymen in Percy Quin State Park. Hoff, who lives next to the park, received permission from the state director of parks and recreation to build a "miniature church" to be used for meditation or family devotions. McComb business leaders responded

and built the tiny building and 150 seat amphitheatre. Williams, Pike County director of missions is developing a ministry in the county during the May 12-Nov. 11 World's Fair at New Orleans. Ministries will take place at Percy Quin and at Bogue Chitto Water Park. The association plans to use traveling groups in evening activities in the park.

"Forced termination is an embarrassment"

By Jim Lowry

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Forced termination of Southern Baptist ministers is an embarrassment to the denomination, according to Brooks Faulkner, supervisor of the career guidance section at the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Faulkner estimates, conservatively he thinks, some 2,500 Southern Baptist church staff ministers are dismissed annually in a dilemma the denomination does not know how to handle.

(See editorial, Page 2.)

Observers agree there is no easy solution to the problem that can leave ministers and their families emotionally and financially distressed and churches frustrated and unstable.

During a meeting of church-minister relations directors from state Baptist conventions, several problems and some possible solutions were discussed in an effort to gain insight for counseling suddenly unemployed ministers and providing guidance for pastorless churches.

Although no single solution will halt the rash of minister terminations, Faulkner said one step which could positively influence a more stable relationship between ministers and churches would be an open covenant or contract.

"A covenant which includes cooperation, mutual understanding, and an ongoing feedback process is needed in Southern Baptist churches between ministers and congregations," Faulkner said.

A frequent problem is that neither the church nor the minister knows what to expect from the new situation because expectations are never discussed in concrete terms.

"The church has the right to expect the minister to visit in hospitals, witness to lost people, and maintain some regular office hours for visits and calls because they are paying his salary," he continued. "The pastor may not like it as much as studying, but he is answerable to the congregation."

"It is a question of authority in the church," he continued. "The congregation has the right to expect some regular hours, but conversely, cannot expect the pastor to spend night and day visiting and answering the telephone."

"In the question of authority in the local church, ministers need to remember credibility and accompanying authority is gained through years of cooperation and proven leadership," Faulkner explained. "Telling church members who is in charge can do more to raise the question than settle it."

Sometimes churches need to consider alternatives to terminating a minister because of some disagreement. An interim pastor, for instance, could provide the leadership needed for a cooling-off period to salvage a minister's career and the stability and community influence of the church.

According to Faulkner, the minister is rarely the issue in a forced termination, which does not solve the problem. In most cases where the minister is terminated, a substantial conflict existed before the minister

was called to the church.

"After a forced termination, the church often is embarrassed because of what has been done, the pastor is embarrassed because he and his family can't deal with the crisis in their lives and the denomination is embarrassed by the whole issue because we don't know what to do about it," he explained.

In an effort to stem the tide of terminations in the denomination, the church-minister relations directors considered several solutions which, if applied to developing situations, they felt could positively affect relationships between congregations and ministers.

The directors urged seminaries to prepare ministers to deal with conflict with studies in conflict management, staff relationships, and personnel management.

The state directors agreed guilt for forced terminations in the Southern Baptist Convention cannot be directed solely at either the churches or the ministers. Some churches seem to lose a pastor every two or three years because they are displeased with his performance.

On the other hand, some ministers, in an attempt to climb the ladder of success, change churches too quickly, are lazy, lack leadership skills or always preach negatively.

The issue is not going to be resolved tomorrow, Faulkner said. In fact, it is only beginning to be discussed openly so the denomination is aware of the many lives which are being affected. There is a great need for care, compassion and understanding by all Southern Baptists toward churches and ministers alike whose direction and calling have been altered by crises which might have been avoided if treated in the early stages.

(Lowry writes for the Sunday School Board.)

House dedicated

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa—Southern Baptist missionaries in South Africa recently dedicated the Baptist International Mission Services buildings, which contain a guest house and facilities for media and purchasing services for missionaries across southern Africa.

The media center, directed by Frank Baker, has a recording studio for both radio and television.

Ghana hospital gets fuel; reopens within two weeks

NALERIGU, Ghana (BP)—Baptist Medical Centre, Nalerigu, Ghana, reopened less than two weeks after a fuel shortage forced it to close.

John Mills, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's director for West Africa, got indirect word Dec. 21 that the hospital reopened after it received fuel the government shipped from Accra. Because of difficulty communicating with Ghana, Mills had no other details.

Missionaries Ben and Sandra Nash of Mississippi are assigned to the hospital.

The hospital, in northern Ghana, closed in early December because it lacked fuel to run electrical generators to sterilize equipment, operate lights for surgery, or pump water.

The closing came in the midst of the area's worst yellow fever epidemic since the 1930s, when two missionaries died from the disease. Before the hospital closed, missionaries administered most of 100,000 doses of yellow fever vaccine provided in November by the FMB.



By Jerry Clower
professional entertainer
Yazoo City

The Cooperative Program enables me to serve as a missionary, a Christian doctor, a Christian educator, and in many, many other roles where the program operates.

But if I did not belong to a choice church that gives 30 percent to the Cooperative Program, then I would be curtailed in my zeal to give to all

"My church gives 30%"

these endeavors. I think a lot of churches are robbing themselves of great blessings in not giving more through the Cooperative Program. I praise God that I do worship in the First Baptist Church of Yazoo City, Mississippi. I do not believe it would be possible to get our people to lower the percentage of Cooperative Program gifts... they are completely dedicated to continuing the 30 percent because of the many blessings we have received from it.

"Living in Hope"

Jim Towns will speak to singles at seminar

Jim Towns, author and college professor, will be the featured speaker at the first singles seminar sponsored by the Christian Action Commission in 1984.



Towns

Alta Woods Church, in Jackson, will host the seminar for the second year.

Towns is professor of communication at Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

Towns will be speaking three times to the entire seminar. The topics of

these major presentations are "When Reality Moves in Like a Freight Train" (Friday evening), "You Cannot NOT Relate" (Saturday morning), and "Getting It All Together Through Renewal" (Saturday afternoon.).

Small group seminars will be led by Towns; Annette Hitt, Jackson, frequent speaker at conferences and seminars related to singles and single parenting; and Paul G. Jones, II, executive director-treasurer of the CAC. Registration will begin at 6 p.m. Jan. 27, at the church. There is no cost.

Participants will be responsible for their own meals and lodging. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Christian Action Commission, Box 530, Jackson, Miss., 39205, Phone: (601) 968-3800.

State WMU will sponsor 10 buses to National Acteens Convention

Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union will sponsor 10 buses for the National Acteens Convention July 18 to 21 in Fort Worth, Texas. These buses will accommodate approximately 400 Acteens and their leaders.

The buses will depart from different locations of the state during the pre-dawn hours of Wednesday, July 18, and return Sunday morning, July

22. Cost of the bus trip is \$178, which includes everything except meals and spending money. Included in the cost is a visit to Six Flags Over Texas and possibly visits to other points of interest in the area.

Persons going on the state-sponsored buses will stay in the American Hotel in downtown Fort Worth, which is within walking distance of the Tarrant County Convention Center. Accommodations are four persons to a room. There must be at least one leader for every seven Acteens.

Reservations for the bus trip must be made by February 15 with Bryan Tours, Inc., Attention of Susan Salley, Box 5221, Jackson, Miss., 39216. The reservation with Bryan Tours

Photo policy

1. The Baptist Record will return only those pictures accompanied by a self addressed stamped envelope.

2. The Baptist Record can use only good crisp photos in order to achieve reasonable reproduction. (Polaroid seldom will reproduce properly.)

3. We will run all pictures of G.A. coronation services (and R.A. recognitions) that measure up to the quality standard. We will have news items for those that do not send usable pictures.

4. For musical performances at churches and associational programs, only Mississippi non-professional groups will be pictured, and then only if the program is not one for the group's own church. For promotion of statewide meetings the use of pictures of music groups will be decided by the Baptist Record staff.

5. The Baptist Record will run notices of service anniversaries relating to Baptist entities in Mississippi any time we receive them. We will use pictures only in multiples of five years.

6. We can use college-bestowed honors only when we are aware that the honoree is a Mississippi Baptist.

7. Because there are so many instances in which they would be applicable, we cannot use evangelists' pictures in revival meeting situations.

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Copiah-Lincoln director of missions retires Dec. 31

Eugene Roberts retired Dec. 31 as director of missions for Lincoln and Copiah Baptist Associations.



Roberts assumed this position in April of 1965. He had previously served over 20 years as a pastor of churches in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

His last pastorate was at D'Lo, Miss. Copiah Baptists conducted a recognition service for him at their annual association meeting in October. The Copiah Baptist Ministers' Conference presented him a plaque.

Lincoln Baptists honored Mr. and Mrs. Roberts with a reception at Central Church on Nov. 6, and presented a plaque to them.

The Lincoln Association Woman's Missionary Union surprised the Robertses with the gift of a quilt. Each of the 39 churches of the association was represented with a patch on the quilt.

Both associations received a free will offering from the churches and presented checks to the Robertses on their retirement.

During the 18-year period Roberts

has served as director of missions for Lincoln and Copiah, Mrs. Roberts has served as association secretary, association clerk, and in other unofficial capacities to assist in the work of the associations.

The Robertses have witnessed growth in the associations. In 1965 Copiah Association reported 30 churches, with combined membership of 8,404. In 1983, Copiah Baptists reported 29 churches with 8,915 members.

Lincoln Baptists reported 38 churches with 11,678 members in 1965. In 1983 they reported 39 churches with 13,437 members.

In 1965, the churches of Copiah Baptist Association received \$430,422 in offerings; they gave \$64,686 to missions. In 1983, the Copiah churches reported an income of \$1,793,175; of that amount the churches gave \$325,336 to missions.

Lincoln Baptists reported total combined receipts of \$517,109 in 1965; of that amount the churches gave \$85,744 to mission causes. In 1983, the receipts of 39 Lincoln churches totaled \$3,949,885, and the churches gave \$467,850 to missions.

One significant achievement during the ministry of Roberts is the acquisition of property at East Monticello and North 2nd Street in Brookhaven. This building provides

office space and conference rooms. Recently the associations have received video-tape player-recorder equipment which is available to churches on a loan basis.

Both Lincoln and Copiah Associations have responded to mission projects in other parts of the United States where Baptists are planting new churches. Both associations are providing scholarship assistance to young people who are preparing for church-related vocations. Both are sponsoring activities for youth.

Baptists of Lincoln and Copiah Counties have worked together since 1962 in providing a program of association work.

The Robertses will continue to live in Brookhaven. They will be involved in short-term mission projects with the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board. He will be available to teach study courses, to serve as interim pastor, and to work in revivals. This couple is also certified by the Family Ministry Section of the Baptist Sunday School Board to conduct basic Marriage Enrichment Retreats.

Roberts stated, "Lincoln and Copiah Associations are blessed with capable and dedicated lay leaders, men and women, as well as capable pastors. I expect the work to continue to grow."

Lottie Moon gifts



SOUTHWOOD CHURCH, IUKA, a congregation with 20 families, went over its \$1,000 Lottie Moon goal on Dec. 18, by reaching \$1,200 in gifts.

The same church set a goal earlier in 1983 of \$500 for the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering, and gave \$505. In November, reports Neil Moore, interim pastor, they had a four-day revival. "A fine couple in their mid-twenties were saved," he said, "and two more couples joined by letter. We had baptized three in October in Pickwick Lake." Southwood has six deacons and is using the Family Ministry plan. The church is using a mobile chapel provided by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

In the Lottie Moon display, each candle represented a \$50 gift. Four extra candles had to be added. Pictured are Purvis Cappleman, stewardship chairman; Matt Keith, chairman of deacons; Sandra Guice, treasurer; and Neil Moore, pastor.

Clarke lights star twice

Clarke College students more than doubled their goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The college's Lottie Moon Star had 35 small bulbs (\$30.00 each) and one large bulb in the center (\$150.00) which if lighted would mean the goal of \$1,200.00 was reached. On November 30, enough came in to turn on 5 bulbs. On December 7, three more bulbs were lighted. Two students then challenged the BSU director, J. B. Costilow, by saying "If we get ten people to pledge \$100.00 each, will you give an extra hundred?" The director said "yes" and on December 14, in chapel one of the small bulbs was lighted.

The director then challenged the

students by saying, "If you reach \$2,000.00, I'll give another \$100.00." The academic dean, Ron Kirkland, heard the challenge and said "Whatever the students lack reaching \$2,000.00, I'll give it; get your money ready!"

Then came the final lighting. A student summer missionary, Ann Atkins, showed slides and spoke on her work in Buffalo, N.Y. All the bulbs were turned off. The Baptist Young Women made a gift of \$300.00 and students from everywhere began to walk out to feel the joy of turning on a bulb. Finally all the bulbs were lighted. The star shone again. The final tabulation of all gifts and pledges as of Dec. 20 came to \$2,807.13.



Don and Ann Dent



David and Kay Carmen

with Christian Missionary Alliance. He was born and reared in India. Kay, a nurse, will assist her husband on the mission field.

A third missionary couple with connections with the Brookhaven church is the Ralph Calcotes who serve in Japan. Robert E. Self is First, Brookhaven, pastor.

Brookhaven commissions two couples

First Church, Brookhaven, on Dec. 11 commissioned two couples to foreign missionary service—the David Carners and the Don Dents.

Don and Ann Dent are going as career missionaries to Singapore. Don is a native of Holly Springs and is a graduate of Golden Gate Seminary. Ann is the former Ann Jones of Brookhaven. The Dents gave testimonies and special music. A reception was held in their honor.

David and Kay Carner were commissioned as short term missionaries to India. Carner, a surgeon, volunteered to fill in for a missionary doctor on furlough in the States. He is the son of missionaries who were

Names In The News...

H. L. (Dick) Carraway, pastor of Enterprise Church, Mississippi Association, was presented with a money tree from his congregation on Dec. 17. This was in commemoration of his 20th year as pastor of that church. Mrs. Irene Van Norman had written a tribute to him and it was read as an expression of the love of the Enterprise people for him.

Hubert B. Smothers, president of Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy in Seymour, Tenn., died early Jan. 1 in a fire which destroyed the president's home on the academy campus. Smothers, 59, apparently was overcome by smoke when he returned to the two-story home thinking one of his grandchildren was still inside the burning house. Smothers had been president of the high-school level boarding school since September 1970. The school is part of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Violet Tackett, of Rt. 1, McComb, whose book of poetry was reviewed in the Baptist Record recently, has been notified that her book, *The Woods are Full of Prayers*, is being placed in the state archives. The Mississippi Department of Archives and History in Jackson bought the softcover book for its library. This is a noncirculating reference library for interested persons, containing books about Mississippi by Mississippians. The book contains a Bicentennial poem entitled "Father of Fathers" in which the poet traces her ancestry through Lazarus Reeves, a Revolutionary War soldier, and his son, John Reeves, both Pike County pioneers. Mrs. Tackett says her ancestry is shared by hundreds in that area.

Joe A. Thompson, pastor of Calvary Church, Blytheville, Ark. began in the Dec. 22 issue writing Life and Work Sunday School lesson commentaries for the *Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine*. He is a native of Mississippi and a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. He has served churches in Mississippi and Arkansas and currently is moderator of the Mississippi County Baptist Association in Arkansas.

Roland Q. Leavell II has accepted a position with Church Finance, Inc., Jackson, coming from New Orleans,



where he was Director of Auxiliary Services at New Orleans Seminary. Leavell is a graduate of Mississippi College and is the son of Landrum P. Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary, and Mrs. Leavell.

Jim Bethea, 55, consultant, Brotherhood Department, Alabama Baptist State Convention, died Dec. 20 of a heart attack, in Montgomery, Ala. A native of Birmingham, Bethea had directed the Royal Ambassador boy's mission work for Alabama Baptists for 11 years and was director of the Alabama Baptist boy's camp at Shocco Springs Baptist Assembly, Talladega. He was a graduate of Samford University and Southwestern Seminary. He is survived by his wife, Peggy, of Montgomery; sons, David, of Montgomery; Terry, of Tuscaloosa; Tim, of Birmingham, and father.

James Kelly Barnett, pastor of Beech Grove Church, Pattison, was recently ordained to the gospel ministry by Oak Grove Church, Simpson Association. Oak Grove is Barnett's home church, where he surrendered to God's call, when Carlton McNeer was pastor. The charge to the candidate was brought by McNeer.



The charge to the church was delivered by Harold Gartman, present pastor at Oak Grove. Joe H. Tuten, pastor of Calvary Church, Jackson, preached the ordination sermon.

Glen Schilling, director of missions, Simpson Association, led the ordination prayer. The Barnetts were presented gifts of love from McNeer, Tuten, and Calvary Church. Bob Harris, chairman of deacons at Oak Grove, presented a Bible and certificate of ordination.

A reception was held, honoring the Barnetts. Kelly and Colleti Barnett are attending Mississippi College.

Ruth Nelson, 83, who worked for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee from its establishment in 1927 until her retirement in 1965, died at her home in Nashville, Dec. 26. As a bookkeeper for the agency she attended every annual session of the SBC from 1933 to 1965 and countersigned distribution checks to SBC agencies for more than \$413.8 million.

Oriental Circus Church wins 16 new believers

JAKARTA, Indonesia (BP)—Oriental Circus Baptist Church, a fellowship of traveling circus performers in Indonesia, has baptized 16 new members.

During October and November four circus ring hands, 10 younger performers and two children of the circus owners and managers made professions of faith.

The new growth came under the ministry of Southern Baptist missionaries John and Nell Smith of Mississippi, who were temporarily living in Jakarta, the troupe's base city. The Smiths began the church six years ago after leading several circus members to Christ.

The newest believers were baptized in a swimming pool at the large

dormitory-like house where the troupe stays while in Jakarta. The church, whose members are Oriental Circus employees and their families, was featured in the 1982 Southern Baptist children's mission study book, "Church in the Big Top," and a 30-minute color movie, "Oriental Circus."

Before the Smiths' latest visit, church members had lost some of their excitement. Three key leaders had left the circus for various reasons. The Smiths had been away for three years because of illness and visa problems.

"It's not easy to be a good Christian in their situation," said Smith, urging continued prayer for the circus church. "But they keep on."

Baptists aid in relief to Thai flood victims

By Maxine Stewart

BANGKOK, Thailand (BP)—Southern Baptists are responding with manpower and money to the worst flooding Thailand has experienced in 40 years.

The Foreign Mission Board has released \$10,000 for food, agricultural assistance and medicine to aid victims of floods that started the end of August and are predicted to continue at least to late January.

More than three-fourths of the country's 72 provinces have been affected by floodwater. Monsoon rains triggered landslides and produced floods that destroyed or seriously damaged many of the country's crops and wiped out entire orchards.

Thousands of Thais have abandoned their homes. In Bangkok rising water forced Southern Baptist missionaries William and Susan Smith of Virginia and Texas, Judson and Har-

riett Lennon of North Carolina, and Max and Betty Alexander of Arkansas to flee their homes.

The Thailand Baptist Mission has requested \$11,015 for emergency repair to six mission houses and \$6,600 for repair to 35 mission vehicles.

Several missionaries have contributed personal money for relief efforts. And missionary physician Joann Goatcher of Texas, assigned with her husband, Earl, as consultant in relief and hunger needs in Southeast Asia, has been working with a medical program for flood victims.

New foot diseases are occurring as floodwater in Bangkok has no place to drain and turns putrid. Almost a third of the city's buses are inoperable, and some people are using boats.

(Maxine Stewart is a missionary to Thailand.)

Claas admonishes grads

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Addressing 303 graduates of Southwestern Seminary just eight weeks after speaking at a Romanian seminary with five students, Gerhard Claas urged the group not to "take for granted what is such a great gift of the Lord."

Claas, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said that 90 percent of the Baptist pastors in the Soviet Union have never seen a seminary and do not own a single theological book.

Claas gave the graduates four

points to remember from Jesus' teachings: Jesus is sending them out, he is with them, they have his peace, and they have his Spirit.

"Jesus didn't try to be happy, but to make happy," Claas said. "He did not try to find himself, but to find others."

Claas also encouraged the graduates in their future ministry with the admonition to remember "wherever the Lord is present, something will happen. It cannot be true where the Lord is, nothing will happen."

Annuity Board adds personnel

By Ray Furr

AMARILLO, Texas (BP)—The Annuity Board will add personnel and undergo organization changes in 1984 to meet the increased marketing and servicing demands of Southern Baptist retirement and insurance programs.

In their fall meeting, trustees approved a 13 percent budget increase which will allow the board to add 21 new staff positions, more WATS lines for improved telecommunications and increase funding for direct mailing.

The \$10 million budget represents a

\$1.2 million increase over the 1983 operating expenses, Board President Darold Morgan said that with the approval of the new church annuity plan last July additional funds will be needed to promote the new program to Southern Baptist churches.

The communications department will function as an area under the marketing division. Marketing director, Frank G. Schwall Jr., will act as interim director of the area.

(Furr writes for the Annuity Board.)

Thursday, January 12, 1984

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Just for the Record



EVANSVILLE CHURCH near Coldwater in Tate County, Northwest Association, held a recognition service recently for its GAs, using the theme, "What a Wonderful, Wonderful World!" Mrs. Nancy Lance, leader, and Mrs. Betty Lynn Campbell, assistant leader, presented Badge 1 to Tommi Jones, Badge 3 to Sarah Dilatash, and Badge 6 to Kathy Jo McNeer and Laura Dilatash. This was the first such recognition service held at the Evansville Church in many years. Ed Campbell is the pastor.



PALMER CHURCH, RIPLEY, recently surprised Enoch Purvis with Pastor Appreciation Day. The church presented a Stratolounger chair to him and Mrs. Purvis, above. Lunch was served at the church, Marvin Bibb, director of missions, Calhoun County, and a close friend of the Purvises, delivered the morning message. Purvis has been pastor at Palmer for two years.

Youth and young adults of Calvary Church, Columbus, presented on Dec. 11 the Ragan Courtney-Buryl Red drama/musical, "Celebrate Life," in honor of the church's WMU and the 1983 Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. Mike Carroll, minister of youth, directed the musical. On Dec. 14, the children's choirs of Calvary presented the musical, "A Christmas Gathering Led by Children," by Terry Kirkland. Mrs. Frankie Harpole directed it and Mrs. Peg Mishler accompanied on the piano. On Dec. 18, the Sanctuary Choir of Calvary presented the musical, "His Love... Reaching," by Bill and Gloria Gaither and Ron Huff. J. E. Sims, minister of music, directed the program. Roy Hawkins is pastor.

Missionary News

Charles and Indy Whitten, missionaries to Spain, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 207 S. Washington, Starkville, Miss. 39759). He is a native of Weir, Miss., and she is the former Nella Dean Mitchell of Louisville, Miss. They were appointed in 1947.

Russell and Annette Herrington, missionaries to Costa Rica, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Apartado 1883, San Jose, Costa Rica). He is a native of Mississippi, and finished high school in Goodman. She is the former Annette Horton of Rome, Ga.

Brazilian woman dies after car accident

JAGUAQUARA, Brazil, (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Jerry Smyth accidentally backed his pickup truck over a Brazilian woman Dec. 21. The woman, who had 12 children, died Dec. 23.

The accident occurred on a farm in Jaguaquara managed by Smyth, 57, a Texan and 30-year mission veteran. The woman was gathering tomatoes with other workers when she was struck.

No immediate legal action was taken by the woman's family, according to Thurmon Bryant, Foreign Mission Board director for eastern South America. Smyth will appear in a Brazilian court in March to give a deposition related to the accident.

Staff Changes

J. T. Hannaford has been called as associate pastor, First Church, Moss Point. For the past 21 years he has



Hannaford

served the same church as minister of music. He is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. During the past year he served as second vice-president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.



Williams

Patti L. Williams of Jackson began ministry on Dec. 1, 1983, as director of children at First Baptist Church, Ferguson, Mo. She received the Master of Religious Education degree from New Orleans Seminary in May 1981, and has served as intern in preschool and children's ministry at Calvary Church, Jackson. Most recently she served as minister of education at Monticello Church, Monticello.

James A. Case has resigned as interim pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church, Bogue Chitto, after serving 33 months. During this time, the sanctuary was repainted and the sanctuary was carpeted. Case is available for supply preaching or interim pastorate. He may be reached at Box 595, Brookhaven, Miss. 39601 (phone 833-8244—home—or 384-5710—work).

Records set

RAYONG, Thailand—An ongoing leadership training program whose monthly attendance averages 21 recently drew a record 35 participants—and they came from only two of the four churches involved. The meetings not only are a chance to teach church leaders but also are a rallying point for area Christians near the Gulf of Siam.

New Hope (Attala) has called Dwight Fleming of Philadelphia as pastor.

New Salem (Attala) has called Burt Bryant of Jackson as pastor.

Sallis Church (Attala) has called Rick Nauck of Chattanooga, Tenn., as pastor.

Lamar/Burkes has resigned the pastorate of Peeler Memorial Church, Attala County.

Eugene Bailey has resigned the pastorate of Zama Church, Attala County.

Evergreen Church, Wayne County, called Eric Mitchell as music and youth director. Mitchell is enrolled at



Mitchell

Clarke College, where he is in his junior year. He was reared in Prattville, Ala., under the ministry of Crestview Baptist Church. He has served as music and youth director for the Polkville Church in Polkville. Robert J. Sanderson is pastor of Evergreen Church.

J. Shep Johnson is the new pastor of Bethel Church, Mississippi Association. He was graduated from New Orleans Seminary in December. He and his family are living at Rt. 5, Liberty, Miss. 39645.

Pineview Church, Hattiesburg, has called a new pastor. He is David M.



Becker

Becker, a graduate of Baylor University and Southern Seminary. He concluded a pastorate at Seldon Church in Stephenville, Tex., to begin work at Pineview.

SCRAPBOOK

Shielded from wind and snow

It's turning cold so fast,
The wind is blowing hard,
Freezing is the latest forecast
As snow blankets the ground.

Wanting to see the outside world,
I wipe the mist from a window.
There in plain view I see
One little chubby chickadee.

On a limb, etched in snow,
He's as lovely as a picture
But I know he's cold and hungry—
His friends have flown to warmer fields.

After I fill the feeder that's nearby
And he's feasted on seeds and bread
He then perches under its eave,
And is shielded from wind and snow.

As I stand there watching him eat
And then he sits contentedly . . .
I don't see him at all,
But I see me instead.

REALity

Is that what it is?
You think you aren't REAL
Because Love hasn't slapped
You in the face
And said,
"Hey, here I am.
Accept me?"
My friend, you could be right.
Maybe you aren't
REAL—but not
Because you're
Not loved. Being
REAL
Constitutes acceptance
As well.

—Hope Starnes
Greenville

Help me, Lord

Help me, Lord, to softly walk
Upon the sea of life
Help me lead a troubled soul
Away from sin and strife.

Help me, Lord, to softly talk
So others want to hear
Help me touch a battered soul
And wipe away a tear.

Help me, Lord, to clearly hear
If one should call to me
Help me reach a struggling soul
And pull the victim free.

Help me, Lord, to vision clear
The beauty of a soul
Regardless of the race or creed
The inner self's a scroll.

Help me, Lord, to hear and see
Touch and walk and talk
Give to me extended hands
To bear another's cross.

—Alma Lee Isbell
Amory

Pray for MKs

Jan. 15—Melanie Crockett, Argentina, Mississippi College.



My Heavenly Father watches over me
Each moment of every day
He supplies all my needs, and even more,
He sent dear friends who have not flown.

—Ruby Singley
Columbia

"Where art thou?"

Thou, who art the ruler of the universe,
Where art thou?

In search I look to the heaven;
And there I find thee, O Lord.
Yes, Lord, thou art high and lofty,
even as the clouds.

And, as I look upon those fiery balls
of gas which are called stars,
I recognize thee there.
Yes, God, thou art as fierce and hot
as those stars, in thy warmth.

Then as I glance across the horizon
I get the sensation that I see thee
here, too.
Yes, yonder in that sturdy oak!
Thou art strong and mighty.

But, what goes here? Is that not you,
Lord, in that frail, ugly bush?
It is you, O God thou art, also,
with the weak and homely.

Oh, no! It couldn't be! But, it is thee
Lord, yes, there you are under my
feet,
to be spit and trodden upon by all
men.

Thou art as the soil, which is abused
and spit upon but is the source of all
life.

Thou art as the lustrous, cool grass,
which is a soft carpet over which man
carries his burden.

Where else art thou found, Lord?
Yes, my gaze is now turned upon
myself.

My body is thy temple, O God.
Thou dwellest within my heart and
mind.
Yes, even in my mind, God.
It, too is an example of thy grace and
power.

O Lord, my God, the ruler of the
universe,
thou art everywhere!!!

—Oscar Britt Honea Jr.
(Written at age 16)

State men are graduated

Mississippians who received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary in December were pictured in last week's Baptist Record. Others from the state who received degrees during recent graduation exercises on the New Orleans campus included the following:

James S. Hood, Ellisville native, pastor of Houston Road Church, Laurel, master of divinity; William Eugene Carroll, from Columbus, program director of Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church, Metairie, La., master of religious education; Donald L. Denton, Gulfport native, associate pastor and education director of Grace Memorial Church, Slidell, La., M.R.E.; John Nester, of DeKalb, master of divinity; Howard Burkhardt, Florida native, graduate of University of Southern Mississippi, master of divinity; Myles Dowdy, from Gulfport, interim pastor of Commission Road Church, Long Beach, master of divinity;

Bob Rogers, Tupelo native, pastor of Union Baptist Church, Roxie, master of divinity; Paul B. Oglesbee Jr., Gulfport native, pastor of Lawrence Church, Lawrence, master of divinity; Charlie Seale, from Meadville, pastor of Shady Grove Church, Bogie Chitto, master of divinity;

John W. Vaughn, Scooba native, pastor of Arkadelphia Church, Bailey, master of divinity; Kevin D. Shearer, Laurel native, master of divinity; William L. Smith, Hattiesburg native, pastor of Zion Church, Morton, associate of divinity in pastoral ministry; Lonnie Beall, Lumberton native, pastor of Salem Church, Tylertown, master of religious education; James L. Preston, from Picayune, associate of divinity in pastoral ministry; William Larry Hoffer, Poplarville, master of church music.

Degrees given

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—North Carolina pastor William Henry Crouch challenged graduates of Southern Seminary here, to "let God work in you and through you as his ministers" at the seminary's 152nd commencement Dec. 16.

"It is an awesome thing to be entrusted with the gospel," said Crouch, Southern Seminary alumnus and pastor of Providence Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C. "It is our task to share it."

Crouch specifically urged graduates to pledge themselves to deepening their personal devotional lives and to guard against family problems, against which "the minister's home is not immune." He warned against the "temptation . . . to build up egomania" and said quarreling and jealousy among pastors "reflect our faith."

Crouch, a member of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, also asked graduates to "think about" service on the mission fields. Ninety-five percent of the world's ministers minister to six percent of the world's population, he said, and there is currently one minister for every 12.5 million persons in Southeast Asia. Mission expenditures for that part of the world, he said, equal about two cents per human being.

After Crouch's address, 210 students received degrees from the deans of Southern's schools of theology, religious education, and church music.

Devotional

Pray as God commands

By Farrell Blankenship, director, broadcast services,
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples (Luke 11:1).

It seems strange that Jesus' disciples would have said, "Lord, teach us to pray." These men doubtless grew up in strict religious homes. They had gone to the church and prayed all their lives.



Blankenship

A year before, if you had asked the disciples they might have gotten indignant—"Of course, we know how to pray"—"We have prayed regularly every day for years"—and maybe quoted verses on prayer.

However, when they heard Jesus pray they realized it was something quite different—they did not know how to pray. They saw how much time he gave to prayer and what it meant in his life. As a result of his prayers, they saw things become different. To them prayer had been a form; but to Christ, it was a force.

It's significant that it is recorded this way, "Lord, teach us to pray . . ." It's one of the few things they ever asked him to teach them to do.

In answer to their request Jesus told them, when you pray say, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name."

That is the first step in prayer. We must believe in God, center our mind on God, and feel the presence of God.

Tolstoy—"To know God is to live." Luke 11:2-4 says, "And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

God's promises are holy

God does not change his mind as man does. God will keep his Word. His Word is sure.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8).

James 5:16—We must confess our sins and be righteous, then the Lord will answer prayer and keep this promise.

Matthew 6:7—Pray briefly and sincerely.

John 14:13-14—Pray in the name of Christ.

Mark 11:24—Pray with faith, expectantly.

Matthew 6:9-13—Pray following the pattern of the Lord's Prayer.

Matthew 6:14-15—Pray forgivingly. Pray humbly and contritely.

Luke 11:13—Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit.



Colonial Hills to build sanctuary

Ground breaking was held Dec. 4 at Colonial Hills Church, Southaven, for building of a new 80 x 150-foot \$725,000 sanctuary to seat 1100. The building, to include a library and music suite, will be the second of a three-phase building program of the 18-year-old church. The third phase calls for turning the present sanctuary into a family life center. The congregation has grown from 80 in a trailer in 1965 to 1,300 at present. Four hundred have been added in the past 28 months. Ervin Brown, director of missions, Northwest Association, for 20 years, was instrumental in the founding of the church. Jack Nazary was the pastor for 15 years. Tommy Vinson, current pastor, is assisted by John Joiner, associate pastor in charge of music and youth programs, and Ray Bryant, associate pastor who directs the education program. Members pledged \$400,000 in the "Together We Build" campaign headed by Darrell Hopper, to be added to an existing fund of \$300,000.

Shovels in hand, left to right: Roy Bryant, Howard Butcher, Roy Conner, John Barber, and Richard Weddle, members of the Building Committee; Tommy Vinson, pastor; Darrell Hopper, Paul Partridge, and L. F. Moore, trustees; and Ervin Brown, director of missions.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



FROM
Baptist Children's Village

P. O. Box 11308

Jackson, MS 39213

Gifts of Honor and Memory November 26 - December 23

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a listing of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many gifts and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

(This is a continuation of the listing of Gifts of Honor and Memory which was begun in last week's edition.)

Mrs. Annella Rhymes
Ellenor O. Shannon
Mrs. Ruby Richard
Aunt Cleave Blue Family
James M. Richards
Charline Killebrw
Mrs. Lanie Richey
Oliver & Bess Sanford
J. E. Roberson
Mr. & Mrs. L. A. Roberson
Mrs. Allie Robertson
Lt. Co. & Mrs. Oscar L. Bond, Jr.
Baxter Robinson
Mrs. Baxter Robinson
Mrs. Sophie Rogers
Union Baptist Church
Sybil Rogers
Mr. & Mrs. Troy Priest
Robin Rowland
Mrs. Beatrice T. O'Quinn
Dr. & Mrs. Bob McCord
Shanon Rowland
Dr. & Mrs. Bob McCord
Mrs. Arvilla Rutledge
Mr. & Mrs. James M. Grantham
Mrs. J. W. Sanders
Mr. & Mrs. James W. Pryor
Brother of Mrs. John Sanders
Night Baptist Women, Cleveland
Mrs. Oscar Searey
J. P. & Ruth Fulton
Mrs. Georgia Marie Self
Mrs. W. H. Smith & Janet
Lida Shaw
Mr. & Mrs. T. A. Waits
Shannon Shaw
Mrs. Beatrice T. O'Quinn
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Drapala
Mrs. Sarah C. Shields
Foy A. Davis
John Shepherd
Diane & Robert Bradford
Mrs. Lou Sheppard
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Holloway
Mr. & Mrs. Champ Terney
H. T. Shirley
Forest Baptist Church
Rev. E. B. (Bud) Shivers
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry H. Stephenson
Mrs. Revilla Shuff
Mr. & Mrs. W. O. Barnett, Jr.
Luther Otto Shuffield
Mr. Walker J. Carney, Jr.
Mrs. Lula Simmons
Gussie Magee
Mrs. Mary M. Eubanks
Dan Sledge
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Parker & Family
S. W. Smith
Mrs. S. W. Smith, Sr.
Ben Snowden
Mrs. Leslie S. Turner
Mrs. Ben Snowden
Mrs. Leslie S. Turner
Mrs. L. S. Speakes
Mr. & Mrs. J. S. White
Mrs. Faye Spier
The Jim Hardin Family
Clarence Sprayberry
Mr. & Mrs. J. M. Nipper
Clyde E. Sprayberry
James D. Salter
Mr. Hayes Branscome
Mrs. Camille Read
Employees of Dr. Sprayberry
Mr. & Mrs. Irvin Shuttleworth
Dr. Lee Hasseltine, Jr.
Dr. & Mrs. Joe K. Mauldin
Hilda & Edward Cullen
Douglas T. Luce Company
Mr. & Mrs. Dolan Fleming
Mr. & Mrs. Preston M. Reeves

Mrs. Frances Lucille Stallings
Mrs. Breisch's Sunday School, Leland
Mr. & Mrs. Carey B. Prather
Mrs. George E. Baird, Jr.
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Ted Starnes
Mr. & Mrs. Jack H. Rice, Jr.
Marion Edward Steele
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Mr. & Mrs. Trenton H. Waldrup
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Henry Stephens
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Pope
Dr. & Mrs. T. G. Dukes
Mr. Lloyd Stephens, Sr.
Betty & Bill Combs
Mr. & Mrs. Hobart C. Brooks
Mr. & Mrs. G. L. McAlpin
Mrs. Jean Womack
Dr. & Mrs. T. G. Dukes
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Franklin Stirrup
Forest Baptist Church
Dottie Stoval
Suzanne Harris
Mrs. Ruth Sutton
Mrs. Lucy Dukes
W. D. Swilling
Mr. & Mrs. Noel Duckworth
Mrs. Lois H. Duckworth
Frank Tankesly
Mrs. Annie G. Aden
Mrs. C. M. Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. H. D. Graham
Mrs. Dora Taylor
Mr. & Mrs. Jack H. Rice
Mrs. Charity Thornton
Mr. & Mrs. J. W. Williams
Henry Thornton
John & Billie Whitfield
Mrs. Mary Thrash
Mr. & Mrs. Carl Thornton
Mrs. Lewis Tilghman
Mrs. Lloyd Tilghman, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. L. Kelly Tilghman, Jr.
W. P. (Bill) Traxler
Mrs. T. H. Jackson, Jr.
J. V. Tuggle, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Tiffany, Jr.
Mrs. Margaret Vandercook
Fernwood Baptist Church
Pete Vanlandingham
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Lammons
Ollie Vaughn
Mr. & Mrs. Hilbert Stacy
F. M. Vaughn, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bonds
Miss Teresa Bonds
Mr. J. V. Vessell
Mr. & Mrs. R. L. McAlum
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Woods
Mrs. Clellon Blue
Mr. & Mrs. David Falkenheiner
C. L. Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Blakeney
Mrs. Ted Wallace
Mrs. B. M. Seale
Mrs. Lawrence Walley
Mr. & Mrs. Frank H. Jones
Verbie Walley
Ora F. Jones
Mrs. Marie McKee
Rev. H. H. Ward
Zella Shaper
Alfred Weeks
Yale Street Baptist Church, Cleveland
Mrs. Wanda Weir
Lyon Baptist Church
W. A. Welshans
Mr. & Mrs. Pete Alford
Mrs. Gertrude White
Mr. & Mrs. W. J. Simmons
Mrs. Lotie White
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Mrs. Claude B. Whithead
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Sr. Adult Sunday School, Tylertown
F. G. Whorter
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Mills Wicker
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Mrs. Eula Mae Wilson
Spurgeon Mayfield
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Dr. James E. (Jim) Wilson
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First Baptist Church, Magee
Mr. & Mrs. H. B. Terry
R. S. Withers
Mrs. Ella B. Pridgen
Mr. & Mrs. H. M. Kendall
Gene Wood
Mrs. Russell Hudson
Gene Wood
Mr. & Mrs. Morgan Wood
Mrs. Ada Wright
TEL Sunday School, Louisville
Kitty Zec
Orbie & Shirley Patton
Mr. Huie Ziglar
Charline Killebrew
GIFTS OF HONOR
Mrs. Alyene Arrington
Alathean Sunday School, Collins
Gus Ashby
Rev. & Mrs. James H. Moore
Miss Joel Ballard
Sunday School Class
Mr. & Mrs. Will B. Barrett
C. A. Moore
Dr. & Mrs. Ross Bass
Mrs. Lester Bear
Miss Cecelia Bettencourt
Lou Anna Paine
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Bridges
Mr. & Mrs. R. L. Fortenberry

Mrs. Wilma Burch
Mr. & Mrs. Cayce Ellard
Mr. & Mrs. Howard Burgess
Lou Anna Paine
Mr. J. O. Cameron
Joy Sunday School, Hattiesburg
Mrs. Bonnie Clinton
Joy Sunday School, Hattiesburg
Rev. Lanny Collum
Bluff Springs Baptist Church
Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Covington
Mrs. Joan W. Horst
Mr. J. F. Ellis
Bible Learners Sunday School, West Point
Mr. & Mrs. G. H. English
Kathie D. English
Fidelis Sunday School, Leland
Mrs. Ruth T. Dickens
Pastor & Staff, First Baptist Church, Louisville
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Statham
Mrs. Tommie Ford
Mary Pratt Sunday School
Mrs. Jessie M. Furr
R H F Lynch
Marshall & Lelia Lynch
Mrs. A. R. Hood
Lou Anna Paine
Mrs. Catherine Irvin
Mr. & Mrs. Cayce Ellard
Mrs. E. H. Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. Malcolm W. Heard
Mrs. J. L. Johnson
TEL Sunday School, Louisville
Mr. Monthie
Lexington Post Office
Mrs. Pattie Norris
Mrs. D. C. Wiggins
Mr. & Mrs. Paul N. Nunnery
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Mr. & Mrs. D. D. Reeves
Mr. & Mrs. W. C. Reeves
Mr. & Mrs. D. D. Reeves
Miss Hattie Richardson
Miss Carol Brumby
Mr. & Mrs. I. N. Roberts
Lou Anna Paine
Mrs. Edna Sims
Joy Sunday School, Hattiesburg
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Miss Ann Stanford
Woodlanders Class, Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. R. Barry Vickey
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Staff of Nick Walker & Company
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Mr. & Mrs. Cayce Ellard
Mr. & Mrs. C. C. Wilson
Lou Anna Paine
C. D. Wilson
Helen Acree & Georgia Allen
Mrs. Jo Wilson
C. A. Moore
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Zeigle
C. A. Moore

Cornerstone group

The Village has a few friends who choose to make regular contributions by bank draft. We are told by these friends, who maintain this method to be successful for them, that this is a way to consistently achieve their goals in giving. One friend described it as "having more 'follow-through' on those intentions!" Recently, this "bank draft" method of giving has been commended to us by successful businessmen in the state who are also good Village friends.

We are therefore prompted to tell others that we will gladly work with you in arranging this more convenient method of handling your regular giving to our operating needs. Contributions to \$25, \$50, or \$100, made on a monthly basis through the medium of drafts, will afford the kind of assured giving which enables us to envision and accomplish great things while continuing to meet the needs of today's children.

May we convenience you in this fashion, and, at the same time, better insure our critical needs? Join the CORNERSTONE GROUP through bank drafts. Contact us at Box 11308, Jackson, Miss., 39213 or at 601-922-2242 for details.

Honor roll of churches

Our annual January review of cash receipts is currently in progress, and we here share interesting facts about village receipt experience in 1983.

The first reaction to this analysis, as it has progressed, was one of deep concern because only 1,461 Baptist churches in Mississippi made any cash gift at all to the Village during 1983. Never, in more than eight years, have this many churches failed to have any part at all in designated support of the needs of our children.

Although we understand some of the reasons attributable to an unstable economic year, we are disturbed, as we note the identity of many of these churches, who have been our supportive friends in the past.

The good news surfaced by the analysis is the fact that more churches than ever before (454) made the Village's "Honor Roll" for 1983 by designating gifts totaling \$300 or more for the entire year.

Thus, our Honor Roll listing, prepared for the information of our trustees, is longer and more impressive than ever in our history! 132 churches made designated cash gifts aggregating \$1,000 or more during 1983, the largest number of churches giving at this level, in our history.

In recent years, cash support from organized church sources has rather consistently amounted to 36-37 percent of our total receipts each year, and about 16 percent of our total receipts each year have been realized through our Cooperative Program allocation.

According to currently unaudited Village records, and on the basis of cash gifts received in our offices on or before Dec. 30, 1983, the "top 132" local churches, in terms of 1983, cash, designated support of the Village were:

1. FBC, Jackson, Hinds-Madison
2. Parkway, Hinds-Madison
3. FBC, Water Valley, Yalobusha
4. FBC, Gulfport, Gulf Coast
5. FBC, Vicksburg, Warren
6. Morrison Heights, Hinds-Madison
7. FBC, Louisville, Winston
8. FBC, Greenville, Washington
9. Hollandale, Washington
10. Rolling Creek, Clarke
11. Broadmoor, Hinds-Madison
12. Meadville, Franklin
13. Mt. Zion, Northwest
14. FBC, Laurel, Jones
15. FBC, Grenada, Grenada
16. FBC, Summit, Pike
17. Ephesus, Scott
18. FBC, Crystal Springs, Copiah
19. FBC, Indianola, Sunflower
20. Forest, Scott
21. FBC, Magee, Simpson
22. Raymond, Hinds-Madison
23. FBC, Florence, Rankin
24. Beulah, Simpson
25. Tate Street, Alcorn
26. Main Street, Lebanon
27. FBC, Aberdeen, Monroe
28. East Fork, Mississippi
29. FBC, Meridian, Lauderdale
30. FBC, McComb, Pike
31. Williamsville, Attala
32. Shiloh, Calhoun
33. FBC, Brandon, Rankin
34. Griffith Memorial, Hinds-Madison
35. Calvary, Hinds-Madison
36. Liberty, Mississippi
37. Temple, Lebanon
38. Bethlehem, Scott
39. Hillcrest, Hinds-Madison
40. Fifteenth Ave., Lauderdale

41. FBC, Amory, Monroe
42. Coffeeville, Yalobusha
43. FBC, Anguilla, Sharkey-Isaq.
44. FBC, Clinton, Hinds-Madison
45. Crowder, Quitman
46. FBC, Olive Branch, Northwest
47. North Batesville, Panola
48. FBC, Corinth, Alcorn
49. Webb, Tallahatchie
50. Temple-Petal, Lebanon
51. FBC, Leland, Washington
52. Fellowship, Lauderdale
53. Immanuel, Lamar
54. Morgantown, Adams
55. Sylvarena, Smith
56. Briar Hill, Rankin
57. FBC, Senatobia, Northwest
58. Gray's Creek, Northwest
59. Macedonia, Lee
60. Unity, Pearl River
61. Black Water, Kemper
62. FBC, Starkville, Oktibbeha
63. FBC, Greenwood, Leflore
64. Noxapater, Winston
65. Edna, Marion
66. FBC, Calhoun City, Calhoun
67. Mt. Horeb, Lauderdale
68. FBC, Natchez, Alcorn
69. Harrisburg, Lee
70. Alta Woods, Hinds-Madison
71. Northwest Baptist Association
72. Oak Forest, Hinds-Madison
73. Mt. Zion, Wayne
74. FBC, Kosciusko, Attala
75. Roxie, Franklin
76. FBC, Batesville, Panola
77. FBC, Tupelo, Lee
78. Collins, Covington
79. Central, Pike
80. FBC, Pascagoula, Jackson
81. Midway, Lauderdale
82. Phalti, Jeff-Davis
83. Highland, Lauderdale
84. Morgan Chapel, Oktibbeha
85. Bay Springs, Kemper
86. Bethel, Covington
87. FBC, Columbus, Lowndes
88. Rienzi, Alcorn
89. State Boulevard, Lauderdale
90. Indian Springs, Perry
91. FBC, Brookhaven, Lincoln
92. FBC, Canton, Hinds-Madison
93. North Winona, Montgomery
94. West Kemper, Kemper
95. Pearson, Rankin
96. Moorhead, Sunflower
97. Indian Springs, Jones
98. Skene, Bolivar
99. Woodland Hills, Hinds-Madison
100. Rocky Creek, George
101. Springfield, Scott
102. Harmony, Pontotoc
103. Flora, Hinds-Madison
104. Crenshaw, Panola
105. Straight Bayou, Sharkey-Isaq.
106. FBC, Cleveland, Bolivar
107. FBC, Purvis, Lamar
108. Heidelberg, Jasper
109. Crane Creek, Pearl River
110. Hardy, Grenada
111. Crestview, Lebanon
112. Lexie, Walthall
113. Ridgecrest, Hinds-Madison
114. Calvary, Clay
115. FBC, Hattiesburg, Lebanon
116. Ebenezer, Mississippi
117. Salem, Hinds-Madison
118. FBC, Long Beach, Gulf Coast
119. Sebastopol, Scott
120. Calvary, Warren
121. Trinity, Clay
122. Plainway, Jones
123. Tylertown, Walthall
124. New Hope, Lauderdale
125. Hurricane Creek, Marion
126. Montrose, Clarke
127. FBC, Poplarville, Pearl River
128. Galilee, Mississippi
129. Sallis, Attala
130. East Forest, Scott
131. Center Terrace, Hinds-Madison
132. Woodville, Mississippi

Vision and mission

By Robert Earl Shirley, pastor, Parkway, Tupelo
Isaiah 6:1-8

The death of his beloved king was a traumatic experience for the young Isaiah. For 52 years, Uzziah had been a master of diplomacy and statecraft, successful in both war and peace. He had walled cities, a huge army, and great wealth. Such admiration for his ruler would cause the young prophet to feel Uzziah's death was irreparable. Seeing the corruption rife in his nation, he came to the temple with feelings of hopelessness, despair, and fear. Here he lost a hero and found the Lord.

A vision of God (6:1-4): Isaiah tells us that he saw the "Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up." In spite of everything, God was still reigning. Uzziah was dead, but God was not. So holy is his God that the seraphims covered their faces with two of their wings to indicate that one is not worthy to look upon him. In like manner, they covered their feet to show that we are not worthy to stand in his presence.

The filling of the house with smoke is symbolic of his presence. Most of us today could profit by such an experience. We believe in God, but we have made him so much like ourselves that we find but little comfort in him. Our problems often become unsolvable and our heartaches unconsolable. The cleansing, comforting hand of a loving God is always there, but our eyes are blinded by self-pity, self-interests, and a refusal to listen. Our Lord is not only there,

but stands at the door and knocks. Yet we refuse to let him come in.

A vision of self (6:5-7): One would have anticipated that the response to such a vision would have been one of great joy. Instead, Isaiah cries out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." When Isaiah saw the true nature of God, he perceived his own true nature.

One fares well when he compares himself to others, but when Christ is his standard, he sees his need of a Savior. Isaiah's lips were not worthy to repeat the song of the seraphims. However, God has a need for this man as he does for all of us. Thus, one of the seraphims takes a live coal from the altar and places it upon the lips of Isaiah and says, "This has touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged."

Here is the grace of God found in the Old Testament. The sinner has done nothing to earn or merit such forgiveness. He has simply responded to the revelation of God, an act that is best described by the word, "faith." Recognizing his failing and his sin, he has confessed it to God against whom he has sinned. God then symbolized with the live coal what he has done to a young man's heart. We need no such symbol today.

In the sight of all the world, Christ entered the state of history and died

on Calvary's cross that all might see the love of God and be offered the cleansing and purifying that only he could give. What is needed is not a new vision, but our response.

A vision of service (6:8): When one's heart is committed to God, his feet and his lips become responsive as well. Thus, when God issued a call of volunteers, Isaiah responded, "Here am I, send me." Coercion was not necessary. The prophet responded to a request rather than a command. He did not even know where God was sending him or what task he was to undertake.

He had seen the Lord high and lifted up and was aware that he served a holy God and powerful God who would be with him. Having looked up, he was now ready to look out. Surely it is not coincidence that this man of unclean lips was ultimately to speak or write some of the most beautiful and encouraging words ever spoken by men.

Why should you and I witness today? Because the world needs to know of the existence and greatness of God, and we have the message. Because through our personal experience with his Son, Jesus Christ, we have shared to some extent this encounter with the eternal Father. We know that as the guilt of the prophet was taken away and his sin forgiven, so have we been redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ. Let us also say, "Here am I, Lord, send me."

Bible Book

Elisha and the Syrians

By Bill Causey, pastor, Parkway, Jackson
II Kings 6:8-15

This section deals with Elisha's continuing influence as a national leader and man of God. It was during a period in Israel's history when the Syrians made war against them. Because of the power of God shown primarily through his representative, Elisha, they were unsuccessful.

I. The unseen enemy (6:8-14)

The king of Syria, the enemy of Israel, thought to effect his evil plot by subduing God's people by ambush. (8) This intention was thwarted, however, when the prophet of God, Elisha, made the plot known to the King of Israel (9-10). Thinking there was a spy among his own men, the king of Syria sought to discover who had betrayed him (11). He was to find out that the problem was not a traitor but that the man of God, and therefore God, was on the side of Israel. God was revealing the Syrian plans to Elisha (12). He then turns his wrath and the force of his army against this representative of God (13-14). Several realities must be understood by those who would serve God:

There are those who prey upon the lives of others for their own benefit. They frequently focus their assault upon the people of God and the things of God. Behind these enemies of God lies the power of "the evil one," Satan.

It should be understood by the people of God that we are locked in a combat that has all the characteristics of a war. This war is not fought with ordinary weapons always. The constancy of the battle requires that God's people keep themselves spiritually alert to avoid the ambush.

II. The unseeing attendant (6:15-19)

Elisha's attendant arose early in the morning and went out of the house to discover that overnight the Syrians have surrounded the dwelling place of the man of God. His alarm and despair are obvious as he views the situation from a human point of view (v. 15).

The reply of Elisha is one of the great verses in the Bible, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them" (v. 16). And, is this not our faith always? The Bible constantly gives an assurance that our Father keeps his eye on his own!

What was needed of course was for the attendant to have his "spiritual eyes" opened so that he could perceive the hidden power of God in the same way that Elisha did. The constant need of our world is for Christians to share this insight with others. The appeal of our Lord was that "he that hath eyes to see, let him see." Spiritual truth gives "sight."

Prayer by Elisha opened the attendant's eyes and "he saw." And what he saw relieved his fears and demonstrated that God (cf. Zech. 2:5) and his unseen forces are forever in the service of his people. This awareness is what sustains God's people in the times of their personal crises. "... though I walk through valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me..."

Just as Elisha had prayed for his attendant's eyes to be opened (v. 17), so he prayed for the enemies' eyes to

be "blinded" (v. 18). This word for blindness doesn't mean that they had no sight at all and that all was darkness for them. Rather its meaning is a "lack of recognition." Nothing looked familiar. They couldn't tell where they were. They were "lost."

Elisha then (v. 19) told them he would lead them where they needed to go. We are about to see that the one who wanted to ambush God's people has himself been ambushed by God. Evil is a trap and in the end traps the very people indulging in it.

III. An "eye opening" experience (6:20-23)

Elisha then led the Syrian army into the capital city without any visible force at all. Yet, they are captives as much as if they had been in chains. This third prayer of Elisha here is for the opening of their eyes. They instantly perceived that they are captives of war, but a very different war than they had ever engaged in before (v. 20).

Even the king of Israel didn't know what to do with captives in this kind of war (v. 21), and enquired of Elisha whether he should kill them. The question in verse 22 implies that he probably would kill them if they had been taken captive with the sword and bow. These, however, were prisoners of God. He then commands the king to give them food and drink. What a matchless picture of God's grace. All of us who have been "taken captive" by Christ from the forces of the evil one have discovered the love of God's table. Moreover, the food and drink offered turns out to be the Lord himself. If only God's enemies knew that God cannot be defeated and that his conquest is not brutal but life-giving.

How tragic a commentary that they go back to "their master" (v. 22).

The happy reminder, however, is that they "did not come again into the land of Israel" (v. 23). They were no match for Israel's God and they knew it!

Life and Work

Teaching through parables

By Gerald Buckley, pastor, Parkway, Natchez
Mark 4:1-34

I had just preached my first sermon at my first pastorate. I was single, and the ladies' Sunday School class arranged for me to have lunch each Sunday with a church family. Since I did not know the way to the assigned home that first Sunday, nine-year-old Lewis volunteered to ride and show me the way. As we were riding toward his home, Lewis mentioned that he had enjoyed the story about the horse in my sermon. He then repeated the entire story. I saw clearly from that experience that stories and illustrations are important for teaching and preaching.

Jesus knew the value of stories and gave them an important place in his teaching. The Bible calls his stories parables. A parable has been called an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus taught the greatest truths ever heard in language that those with little education could understand. Those who preach and teach today would do well to follow his example.

A young minister was in his first pastorate, and he was having a terrible time. He was unable to hold the congregation's attention. He was ready to quit as he sat down and wrote to his seminary professor about this inability to hold the people's attention. The teacher wrote back and said, "What you need to do is to examine the preaching of Jesus. Take note that he used stories. He talked about things with which the people were familiar."

I. The parable of mysterious growth

This parable is a reminder of our need for patience. "Sleep, and rise night and day" indicate the passing of time. The farmer does not dig up the seed each morning to see if it is growing, else he would destroy it.

The real point of the parable is the sureness of the growth of the seed. This is a great word of encouragement. It is a strong answer to impatience and discouragement. The disciples in Jesus' day must have been tempted to join the Zealots, to try force as a swifter method of establishing the kingdom. There is ever the temptation to find a short cut for growth. Instead of searching for such short cuts, we need to depend on the sure power of God. God brings forth fruit. His nourishing, redeeming power is in the very constitution of the universe. Man cannot create it, nor can he block it. But he can depend on it and work with it. Our task is to yield more and more of our lives to his control.

This parable would have us understand that we do not produce the harvest. The emphasis is upon the seed. There is great power within the seed. We are to sow the seed in the soil. Many Christians major on debating fine points about the Bible, but minor on sowing its truth in people's hearts. He will bring forth amazing results when we are faithful to sow the seed. Unfortunately, too many of us grow impatient and want immediate results. Jesus was content to sow the seed of the gospel and wait for it to do its work. He sought to change people

and through them to change society. His followers should do the same. We are to sow the seed of the gospel in men's hearts. We must leave the results with God.

II. The parable of comparison (Mark 4:26-34)

This parable warns against the vulgarity of confusing size with significance. We can easily fall into the trap of worshipping bigness. This poison can creep into the mind and the heart of the church. Jesus is saying that we should not despise small beginnings. Helmut Thielicke, the famous German minister, faced a congregation of only three at his first Bible study. Yet, God in time used him to speak to overflow congregations. This parable says to us: do not despise small beginnings.

Although Christians are a minority in this world, we should not let that discourage us. Wherever we are, we should dare to say who we are and what we believe. Then we shall have the surprise of our life. God will use us as light and salt to have a dramatic impact upon the world.

Growth is to be God's work. No limits can be set to a small group of lives that are filled with the spirit of God and dedicated to the service of Christ.

We can trust God where the future is concerned. Dictators and rulers will die, even civilizations will crumble, but God's kingdom will continue to grow. When I live on the side of God and his church, I believe I am on the winning side.

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